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THE TAHTAR TRIBES.

CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN AND POSITION OF THE TRIBES.

THERE is a people dispersed throughout western and central Asia, whose manners and habits of life are, on the one hand, materially distinct from those of the pastoral tribes of the desert, (the Bedoweens,) and, on the other, are more than equally removed from those of the people who inhabit towns. Their condition presents much matter that is curious and interesting, considered only in itself; but it is chiefly because it offers circumstances analogous to conditions of life exhibited in the sacred Scriptures, that this volume is appropriated to them.

It has been usual to compare the patriarchal life, as described, or rather indicated, in Scripture, with that of the Bedoween Arabs. In point of fact, however, the differences are as great as the analogies, and perhaps greater. The Bedoweens are properly the inhabitants of the desert, and hate settled countries, towns, houses, and cultivation. But, in these particulars, the life of the Scripture fathers and patriarchal chiefs by no means agreed with theirs. None of them inhabited the desert, but dwelt in, or on, the borders of settled countries. Some of them had their abode in towns ; some lived at times, and some always, in houses ; and some were cultivators of the ground. The difference is further indicated by the nature of the live stock which they possessed. Camels, horses, and sheep, form the wealth of a Bedoween chief. Of horned cattle he knows nothing, and of asses but little : he does not need them, and their wants and habits are unsuited to the life he leads. But these figure conspicuously among the substance of the Scripture pastoral chiefs.

Now, in all the points in which the pastoral tribes of the Scriptures differ from the Bedoweens, they agree with that other people to

whom we purpose to invite the present attention of the reader, or, at least, with those portions of them to which that attention will be chiefly confined.

These are the Tahtar, Turkman, or Eelaut tribes, who inhabit the region indicated, under various circumstances, but who in all circumstances exhibit a marked predilection for the essential forms of pastoral life and of patriarchal government, which they retain even while occupying lands in a settled country, although in some cases exhibiting approximations towards civil life, which give to them an intermediate character between the desert Bedoweens and the fixed inhabitants of towns.

Persia is largely occupied by tribes of this character; and, in fact, their chiefs constitute the nobles and princes of that country; and as it is there that their peculiar intermediate position appears in which lies the illustrative resemblance to the forms of life offered in the Bible, we shall consider them chiefly as seen in that land, without precluding ourselves from glancing at them in the other regions which they inhabit.

As inhabiting Persia, their name is written by travellers and historians in the various

forms of Eeels, Eelauts, Eelhauts, Ellyauts, Illeyats, etc. But we find that they are known more popularly and generally, in that and other countries, by the name of Tartars, or rather Tahtars, and this, as the most convenient designation, is the one by which we mean to describe them. In fact, these tribes, now inhabiting Persia and Turkey, are derived from those warlike pastoral races who inhabit the regions beyond the Oxus, and who have been great conquerors in their day, having seated their chiefs on thrones throughout all the countries from the river Ganges to the Adriatic Sea; and the descendants of these chiefs are still sovereigns, really or in name, throughout the same extent of country. The Great Mogul and the principal petty princes of India are of Tahtar descent; so are the king of Persia and the great lords of his empire; and so are the sultan at Constantinople and his Turks. But it would take up too much of our space to explain these matters fully at this time.

They consist of many tribes, who have entered Persia at different times, and under various circumstances. Some came in peace, and others in the train of conquering kings;

but never leaving the country when they once got a footing in it. They seem to a stranger as one people; and, indeed, they are such, as distinguished from the stationary inhabitants. But among themselves they are divided into tribes, each of which has a name of its own, and has little connexion with any other, except when several tribes take the same side in a time of civil war; and such wars are frequent in Persia. They differ greatly in numbers and in power. Each tribe has its own chief, who generally bears the title of "Khan," which has nearly the same meaning as "lord." This title is not confined to the chiefs of tribes. There are, indeed, no precise rules about this title. On the one hand, it is a title which kings have been content to bear—the great Genghiz Khan, for instance; and, on the other, it is frequently bestowed at present on persons of no great consideration. All our knowledge on this particular subject was obtained by us, in the Persian metropolis, from a gentleman well acquainted with that country, and who eventually became the British ambassador at the court of Tehran. He informed us that the title "Khan" was a Mogul word: it is often bestowed by a father upon his son, in families of rank, and among

the military tribes, and, though he does not consult the king on the matter, his right to do this is never questioned. The king himself, also, often confers the title upon persons about the court, whose civil or military services have obtained his approbation, and who have no connexion with the Tahtar tribes. The title, when once given, descends from father to son, unless in the case of the chief of a tribe, and he is called "Khan," not so much because his father was a khan before him, as because he is a chief, or because his father, while alive, bestowed the title upon him. In other cases, the title is merely a personal distinction ; something like that which knighthood gives among ourselves. This may, at first view, appear singular ; but, when closely examined, is scarcely more so than the application of the title "lord" with us. Not only the peers who transmit their titles to their heirs are called lords, but all the sons of dukes and the eldest sons of marquises and earls are also styled lords, though this title does not go to their children.

It must not be inferred from this that the dignity of chief of a tribe does not descend from father to son. It does so with more

certainty than the royal dignity itself. It is the eldest son who usually succeeds the father; but if he turn out to be unworthy, he is deposed without hesitation, and the person next in succession is elected in his place. This custom, as Kinneir remarks, "is not peculiar to these tribes, but would appear to have been in use during the prevalence of the feudal system, among the most noble families of Scotland and Spain. It was practised particularly by the houses of Douglas and Lara; and may, in some measure, account for the many eminent persons who, for ages, successively appeared at the head of those illustrious families." This rule seems also to have existed among the Hebrews before the rules of succession were based by the law upon territorial arrangements; at least, the father possessed the power of degrading an unworthy eldest son from his first place in the heritage, for Jacob deprived Reuben of the privilege of primogeniture. This is good as an abstract rule; but it would produce great inconvenience and dissension if it were often carried into practice. In fact, the tribes seldom depose a chief; and never, until they have suffered more from his bad conduct than it might be imagined that men

with a power of deposing him would be likely to endure. In general, the force of the attachment manifested by this people to their chiefs, under all circumstances, is almost beyond belief. This is because he *is* their chief, not because they have any personal affection for him, for, in general, they see but little of him; and although the little they do see may not be to his advantage, still the attachment to him remains. We have heard an instance of a very cruel and oppressive chief, who was in the end imprisoned by the king, at Tehran. This tribe was treated with great favour by the king; but they still earnestly desired that their old tyrant might be restored to them: and the recollection of his bad conduct did not prevent them from saving all the money they could out of their small means, and sending it to him secretly for his support in confinement.

Amongst the Tahtars, the chief very generally considers the devoted attachment of his followers as a property to which he has as much right as to the land and goods which he has inherited from his father. It is a feeling, however, which he usually repays with regard for his people, and defence of their interests;

and, as they are circumstanced, the tribes have particular need of the protection which their chief's influence at court may secure. The king, who is himself a Tahtar chief, is, however, restrained in his dealings with them by the knowledge that, if any considerable number of tribes were to unite for the purpose, they would have it in their power to cast him from the throne, and place one of their own chiefs on it.

We, with our ways of thinking, may suppose that the settled inhabitants of the country, those who dwell in towns, would not submit to have kings imposed upon them at this rate; they are, however, less warlike and courageous than the people belonging to the tribes. Yet, perhaps, they might even fight against the tribes if they had what we might call a rightful king to fight for. But, for more than a thousand years, Persia has never been governed by a native king. It has either been under foreign princes, or its independent kings have always been either of an Arabian or Tahtar family. Every chief of a powerful tribe feels that he has about as good a right to the throne as the reigning sovereign; and hence, when an opportunity offers, some chief either seizes the throne, or declares himself king, and fights with the

actual ruler, or with other chiefs who also desire the crown. In the end, the strongest becomes king: and, when he dies, the struggle for the throne is renewed, either between the members of his own family, or between the chiefs of other tribes. Thus it happens that one family rarely keeps the throne for more than two or three generations; and there has generally been a struggle for it in every reign.

These facts may strongly bring to mind the state of things in Israel after the separation into two kingdoms. It was almost exactly similar, except that the successful competitors for the throne do not appear to have been generally heads of tribes: although, doubtless, most of them could reckon, on some ground or other, upon the support of particular tribes. In the first revolt, Jeroboam was powerfully sustained by Ephraim, to which tribe he belonged.

The Persian king who now occupies the throne is but the third monarch of his family, and although he was the heir of the former king, (his grandfather,) he had to fight with his uncles for the crown. The first of the family who was king was only the chief of a tribe which resides near the Caspian Sea. They

remain chiefs after they become kings, and it is through their tribes they trust to keep themselves on the throne: they, therefore, do all they can to strengthen their own tribe, and to keep up its attachment to themselves. The first king made a small and poor town, (Tehran,) very unpleasantly situated in the north of Persia, the metropolis of the kingdom, for no other reason than that he might be near his own tribe, and able easily to escape to it with his treasure in time of danger and rebellion. This may remind us how David, who could reckon upon the attachment of his own tribe of Judah, and who had reigned in the centre of its territory (at Hebron) over it as a separate kingdom, did not remove his capital beyond the borders of that tribe (at Jerusalem) when he became king of all the land. Nothing could more clearly show the apprehension in which these sovereigns live of losing the crown; and one of the evil consequences is, that the sovereign, instead of employing the revenues of the state for the benefit of the country, hates to lay out a penny that he can avoid spending, and is only anxious to amass as much treasure as he can, with which he may escape to his tribe when a time of trouble comes. He knows that

in the treasure that he may possess, would be his chief hope of recovering his power; and that, if he did not lose his treasure, he would be likely to succeed. Hence, the first endeavour of any one who wishes to be king, is to seize the royal treasure; and he that does so seldom fails in gaining the throne. It was chiefly in order to secure his treasure from this danger that the present family removed the capital so near to their own tribe.

This condition of power, so strongly similar in many respects to that of the kings of Israel, may seem to us to render the position of a king in that country by no means desirable. The kings of Persia, however, think differently. And this brings to mind one of the conversations which sir John Malcolm, when he was ambassador in Persia, had with the late king. This king, who was a very intelligent person, was anxious to understand the nature of the English government. Sir John tried hard to make it plain to him: "I understand all you have told me," the king said; and, after some reflection, he added, "Your king is, I see, only the first magistrate of the country."—"Your majesty has exactly described his situation," said the ambassador. The king then smiled,

and said, "Power of this sort may be lasting, but it has no enjoyment; mine is enjoyment. There you see Suliman Khan Kajir, and several other of the first chiefs of the kingdom, I can cut all their heads off; can I not?" said he, addressing the persons of whom he had been speaking. They answered with profound reverence and unchanged countenances, "Most certainly, O king, if it be your pleasure." Then the king said, "This is real power, but it is not lasting. When I am gone, my sons will fight for the crown, and all will be confusion: there is, however, one consolation, Persia will be governed by a soldier!"

It is thus perceived that the king of Persia has a twofold character, that of head of a nation, and that of head of a tribe; and, from what has been stated, it will be understood how it is that he wishes to lessen the power of all the tribes except his own, and, perhaps, a few others on which he is certain he may depend.

Of course, the king's power of interfering with the tribes depends very much on the strength of his government, and upon the circumstances in which the tribe happens to be placed. Some tribes are obliged to let him do almost whatever he pleases, while others pay

very little regard to his authority ; and, if his government happen to be weak, most of them set his authority at defiance, when it interferes with their own plans. A tolerably powerful king has many ways of controlling a tribe. He can remove a tribe he wishes to weaken to a distant part of the country, where it has little power to do harm ; or, on the other hand, he can remove it from a distance to some place more within his control. Sometimes, but rarely, he ventures to break up a tribe, distributing the men among a number of other tribes ; and we have heard of one or two instances in which a tribe, to which the king had a great dislike, has been so harassed and persecuted, that they have dispersed themselves over the kingdom, and joined other tribes, or have left the country altogether, thus ceasing to exist as a distinct body.

The Tahtars, of course, hate a king who is strong enough to control them ; and long for weak kings and civil wars, when they may be able to follow their own lawless courses without punishment. They would then plunder the villages, and perhaps burn them ; and they would attack and pillage the caravans as they convey goods from one place to another. We

do not read of such doings by the patriarchal pastors, except in the single case of the ravage of Shechem by Jacob's sons, and that was to avenge a wrong.* And it is worthy of note, that Jacob immediately removed from that part of the country, in dread, lest the native princes should visit this transaction with punishment. That such things do not oftener occur in Scripture, is, doubtless, less owing to any material differences in the ancient condition of life, than in the fact, that the Scriptural fathers who followed this kind of life were, for the most part, men who feared God and hated iniquity.

For some years past, the Tahtar tribes have been kept pretty well in order by the government, but they are still continually reciting their own old exploits in robbery, and the exploits of their ancestors; and they make their boast of doings for which they would be put to death in more settled countries. Habit makes people look even upon crime as lawful business; hence the Tahtars talk about robbery just as you hear people talk about trade, and about "bad times," and "good times." Bad times with them are when the country enjoys quiet, and when the government is strong

* Gen. xxxiv. 26—30

enough to prevent them from oppressing and plundering the people, or from making disturbances among themselves. But they speak with rapture of times of confusion and trouble when, as they say, every man who has a heart, a horse, and a sword, can live in comfort and happiness.

Sir John Malcolm, in his lively book, "The Sketches of Persia," relates a conversation which he had while riding along with Mihrâb Khan, the chief of an important tribe. He there says: "During this conversation, we had reached the summit of an eminence, from which Mihrâb Khan — his eyes glistening with joy—pointed out the ruins of a village. 'Look there,' said he; 'it is twenty-five years since I accompanied my uncle, Hashem Khan, to an attack of that village: we completely sacked and destroyed it. The rascals had no Shahin-Shah (king of kings) to protect them then; but there is one consolation, these stupid times cannot last for ever; and if I live long enough to give the vagabonds another drubbing, I shall be contented!'"

The same writer, in his large work, "The History of Persia," relates that, "When hunting one day near the line of march, we came to

a deep ravine, and as we were crossing it, an old man of the tribe of Zak, who was then in my service, turned round, and said with a smile, 'In this ravine, sir, about twenty years ago, I, and ten others of my own tribe, lay in wait for a caravan. We attacked them, and killed five or six useless fellows of merchants and mule-drivers, the rest ran away; and we found plenty of plunder. I lived gloriously,' he continued, 'for some years on the produce of the shawls that fell to my share: but all my cash is gone, and I am now a poor old fellow. Yet, after all,' he added, 'it is some consolation to think that a man has had a share of the good things of this world.'" Miserable is the condition of the villages and unwalled places where this sort of people, whether as invaders or residents, having diverse habits, inhabit the land. It may, indeed, call to mind the state of Israel, as so graphically depicted in the song of Deborah:

"In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath,
In the days of Jael, the high ways were unoccupied,
And the travellers walked through byways.
The villages ceased. They ceased in Israel,
Until that I Deborah arose,
That I arose a mother in Israel."

JUDGES v. 6, 7.

It may be asked, why the king does not expel such aggressive subjects from the land? But he cannot do so if he would; and it must be remembered that he is himself the head of a tribe; and although, as a king, it is his interest to keep them orderly and quiet—and he tries to do so—yet, from habit, he does not look with so much horror upon their proceedings as we do. Above all this, it is not his wish to drive them from the country, or to alter their mode of life, because their hardy habits and their courage render them the best soldiers he is able to get; and he would not, indeed, have an army without them. Most of the Persian soldiers are Tahtars.

But let us return to sir John, who thus proceeds: "A man of one of these tribes, who was sent to accompany two English gentlemen through part of Persia, contended with his companions that a prince of the blood royal, whom he served, had better claims to the crown because he was more dreaded than one of his royal brothers, whom *they* had extolled for his humanity, virtue, and intelligence. 'You see,' he observed to them as they were riding along, 'that small village before us. If the prince you praise were where we are, the inhabitants

would be at this moment running to meet him, and eager to pitch his tents: whereas, if my master were here, so great is the terror of his name, that they would already have fled to the summit of the neighbouring hills. Now, I ask you,' he said, exultingly, 'which is the most proper of these two to govern such a kingdom as Persia?'" This shows, very strikingly, the way in which their habits make these people think and feel. Looking upon the king as a Tahtar, they consider that it is more his business to make himself feared than loved by the inhabitants of villages and towns.

Sir John further states, that "The same person, who was rather an intelligent man of his class, was very inquisitive to learn from his fellow-travellers the condition of England: and after listening with delight to their account of the richness of its fields, the beauty of its towns, and the great wealth of its inhabitants, he exclaimed, 'What a number of plunderers you must have there!' On being told that the laws restrained men from plundering, he asked, with apparent astonishment, 'What, then, can be the occupation of so numerous a population?' Those who had given the descriptions which led to these remarks were at once amused and

surprised at so extraordinary a proof of that strong bias which the human mind receives from its feelings and thoughts being all directed in one course."

The writer adds a note: "When I returned from Persia, in 1801, I brought with me a man of some rank belonging to a tribe in Khorassan, who desired to visit India. I was anxious that he should see and admire Calcutta, and sent a person to show him every part of that city. When he returned, I asked him what he thought of the capital of British India. 'It is a noble place to plunder!' was his reply."

These anecdotes may afford some insight into the character of a people who look down with so much scorn and pity upon the inhabitants of the towns and villages, that they seem to consider them as quite an inferior race of beings, whom it is scarcely a sin, and certainly no shame, to plunder and destroy, when they can safely do so. It has often struck the writer that they seemed to regard their industrious fellow-subjects in no other light than as stupid drudges, whose business in life was only to get together property which they might wrest from them.

But it is to be remarked, that while these

people glory in the name of plunderers, they scorn the name of *thieves*.

The reason is not difficult to find. A man gets at the property of others by thievery and fraud, because he is afraid or ashamed to do it openly. By this, therefore, he seems to confess his weakness. But to take it openly, and often to fight for it, seems like something brave and bold; and therefore it is that a quiet and industrious man does not hate both thieves and robbers more than the robber himself hates and despises a thief. In proportion as a government becomes strong, and has a good police, the practice of open robbery lessens, but thievery increases. In our own country, there is not now a quarter of the robbery there was a hundred years since: but there is more thievery. This seems to be taking place in Persia also. We have been in the country more recently than sir John Malcolm, and we certainly did not find so much abhorrence of theft among the Tahtars as he did. On the contrary, the people with whom we travelled seemed to consider that whenever these wanderers could not rob, they would not have the least objection to steal, if an opportunity were allowed them. There is reason to expect, no

doubt, that if the government remain strong, they will, in time, be changed from a race of robbers into a race of thieves.

The abhorrence among the tribes of the *name* of theft is not without exceptions. There are some of the lesser clans whose occupation is avowedly theft; but even these pretend to honour. When the British mission, headed by sir John Malcolm, passed through Kurdistan, the camp was one day pitched in the vicinity of some huts of the tribe of Ghishkee. The women were employed in baking, spinning, and weaving carpets, while the men were, as usual, wandering idle, or in search of game. The English gentlemen—who had been told that this tribe were remarkable for being the greatest thieves in Persia, and that the children were daily beaten by their mothers to accustom them to pain, that when they were caught stealing, they might not be alarmed, by blows, into a confession of their accomplices—asked an old man if these accusations were true? "We are abused," he said, "more than we deserve; for, after all, theft is only a species of war. We never rob or steal, except from those with whom our ruler is on bad terms. When Persia is in confusion," he added, "then is our

harvest: but now these Kujurs (the reigning family) have it all their own way, and we are likely to be ruined." On hearing some suspicion expressed of the truth of his statement, the old man observed with some animation, that his tribe had been appointed to guard the English camp, and that an opportunity would thus be afforded of judging of their honesty, when a trust was confided in them. He had a right to make this boast; for they were faithful guards, and not a single article was missing during the time they attended the mission.

It must not be supposed that all the tribes conduct themselves in the same manner. They are all, perhaps, actuated by the same spirit, but their conduct depends much upon the locality in which they are placed. Those that are in the neighbourhood of large towns are obliged to be more orderly than those who are distant from the control of government, and who therefore do just as they please. In our travels, we observed that, in passing among some tribes, our people kept close together with their weapons quite ready for use, and were continually turning their eyes with great trouble and alarm towards the distant tents, expecting every moment to see a body of these terrible

fellows galloping out against us, and great was their joy if they were allowed to pass through the dangerous districts in safety. But in parts where other tribes fed their flocks, they have jogged along with much unconcern, appearing to feel no more alarm about the Tahtars than they would about so many peaceful shepherds. But when we encamped at night, the greatest care was taken to prevent them from stealing any part of our cattle or property, while we slept. Among other plans for this purpose, one was, that about sunset every man who had a gun fired it off repeatedly. This was a measure of precaution, to let our dangerous neighbours know that the caravan had guns and powder for its own defence, and that it would not be safe for them to meddle with it. Even in the day-time, the people with whom we travelled did not like strangers from the Tahtar tents or villages to be about their camp, and often forbade any one to approach. Every one keeps also a sharp watch over his property, even then.

We recollect that on some occasions, when our camp was fixed in the morning, after we had travelled all night, it often became so hot during the day, that many of us removed our-

selves to the shade of a rock,* or a wall in the neighbourhood, where they sat carefully watching the property they had left, with the guns ready cocked in their hands, or else resting them upon a ledge of rock, and so holding them ready aimed, to fire if they should see a stranger near it. On the other hand, it is not thought safe for any persons, belonging to a company of travellers, to go out of sight of his camp. When we have ourselves been tempted to take a little stroll, we have been followed by persons from the camp, who, either by persuasion or gentle force, obliged us to return. We used at first to be offended at their interference, and to smile at their alarms; but it was not long before we became satisfied that they were perfectly in the right.

They seemed to consider that these people would rob whenever they could, and that they would steal when they could not rob. The care which was taken of our camp was often in vain; for it was almost a common accident to find that some of our best horses, and some of our luggage, had been stolen away during the

* See Job xxiv. 8, "They embrace the rock for want of a shelter;" and Isa. xxxii. 2, "As the shadow of a great rock."

night. It seems that while it is daylight they stroll peaceably about to discover which are the best horses, mules, or asses, and in the night-time return to steal them.

Some tribes are considered robbers, but not thieves; others are regarded as thieves, and not robbers; and others are looked upon as both thieves and robbers. Although speaking of them generally, they much better like to be considered as robbers than as thieves; yet there are a few tribes which have a very old reputation for being the most expert thieves in the country; and even *they* try to make amends for this character, by claiming to be remarkably honourable men among themselves, and at all times faithful to each other.

CHAPTER II.

INTERNAL ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT.

As the Tahtar tribes do not probably form less than one-fifth of the inhabitants of Persia, it may be supposed that their presence does not contribute to the comfort or quiet of that interesting country. That is in a great degree true. Still, the picture has two sides; and we have now to turn that side to the reader, which presents the character and habits of the tribes under some more pleasing aspects.

It will have been already perceived that these great lords that have been mentioned, the chiefs of tribes, do not generally live with their people, and move about with them from place to place. This must be explained. Among the plans of the kings for keeping the tribes under some control, one is, to make them send their sons to the capital as hostages for the

fidelity of their fathers. These young men are treated with a good deal of consideration; and the way in which they are brought up renders them less rude than they would otherwise be, or than the men of their tribes usually are. As the tribes do not like to have the king interfere with their affairs directly, his plan is so to deal with the chiefs, that through them he may manage their people.

He, therefore, encourages them to remain at court after they get advanced in years, by giving them offices in the civil and military services. But at the same time that he appears to reward them by such honours, he in fact brings them more completely into his power; for, according to the customs of the country, the lives and property of public officers are quite at the disposal of the king. He is obliged, however, to treat them with more respect than he thinks necessary with others who have no attached tribes to protect them, and to avenge them, if they required.

There seem to be some indications of the same kind of policy in the attention which was paid, and in the employments which were given, to the princes of the tribes of Israel, by David, Solomon, and other kings; and it is to be

remembered that these hereditary chiefs had still great authority and influence in their several tribes, when they had ceased to be a tent-dwelling pastoral people.

It should be further stated, that it is expected that the chiefs of tribes who dwell at a distance, as well as the great officers in distinct employment, should have part of their family at the capital. These hostages (for such they are in fact deemed) are always watched, but seldom strictly guarded, unless when the person, for whose fidelity they are in pledge, is suspected of treasonable practices. If he actually rebel, they are sometimes put to death ; but examples of such severity are not frequent. The dread of their occurrence, however, while it retains numbers in the path of duty, makes every ruler, who is at all independent, decline, as long as he is able to do so, to comply with this custom ; and his consenting to send his eldest son, or any part of his family, to remain at court, is always regarded as a token of complete submission.

In the capital of Persia, one cannot at first easily tell who are chiefs, and who are not. The polite manners which they have learned at court cover them like a cloak, and hide for a

time their more natural character. The leading indications of their character are found in the overbearing pride and arrogance which arise from the feeling that they are the first men in the empire, and that there are thousands of men who would lay down their lives for their sakes. They are also disposed to be very passionate; and if it happen to be the king who has provoked them, they speak of him, who could cut their heads off if he liked, in a style which would frighten us, whose sovereign cannot touch a hair of our heads. If any one were to tell this to the king, he would most probably not be angry, but would rather laugh; for he knows their character, and that it would be no use to mind what they say when in a passion. Something which illustrates this occurs in one of sir John Malcolm's books. He says that "he once heard a nobleman of one of the tribes use the most violent and insulting language when speaking of the prime minister. As one of the minister's particular friends was present at the time, sir John was alarmed for the consequences that might follow, and when he met the nobleman the next day, asked him if anything had happened? 'It is all settled,' he replied; 'I have made an apology; I told the minister that I was

a Tahtar, and that you know,' added he, laughing, 'is an excuse for anything wrong a man can say or do.'" This means, in plain English, that people do not mind what they say, because it is known that they are a foul-mouthed people. When these chiefs get advanced in years, the court does not seem so pleasant to them as when they were young; and they often get permission to retire to their tribes, on condition that they leave or send their sons to go through the same training. When in their own country, and among their own people, they occupy some mansion or fort in a town or village within their domain during winter, and in summer form a camp in the plain, and live in tents. Of this practice there are some indications in Scripture; for we find that Laban lived in a house; Jacob built himself a house at Succoth on his first return from Padan-aram; Lot occupied a house in Sodom; and Job and his sons lived in houses. All these were pastoral chiefs; and in summer they probably lived in tents.

Among their own people, the Tahtar chiefs appear to much more advantage than at court. They are then seen in their natural character, which is that of bold, overbearing, and passionate men, but, at the same time, hospitable,

generous, frank, and even liberal. They are certainly all the better for laying aside the arts and some of the manners which they learned at court; while their residence and education there have done them good, in some respect, by expanding their minds and rendering them better informed than they could have been if they had been brought up among their own people. A chief of this sort is sometimes a dangerous person to have to do with; but he seems, upon the whole, to be, not only in rank, but in fact, one of the most respectable characters in the country, and one with whom an Englishman would much rather have intercourse than with the plausible, heartless, and dissembling nobles of the royal court. The chief must be the governor of his tribe in name, and ought always to be so in fact. This renders it necessary to explain how it is that he governs his tribe while he is away with the king at court.

In the first place, it must be understood that a tribe does not live altogether, or in one place. And this is because they could not then find in one place sufficient pasture for their cattle. The tribe is, for this and other reasons, divided into several branches or families; and, while the chief is over the whole tribe, each of its

branches has over it a certain person called "an elder." This title he bears as among the Arabs, and, so far as the tribes were concerned, among the Jews, not necessarily because he is old. The office of elder, like that of chief, descends from father to son, and must, therefore, be held sometimes by one who is not advanced in years. The elders are generally related, more or less nearly, to their chiefs; and they form the officers of the tribe in time of war, and its magistrates in peace. Now, when the chief does not reside with his tribe, he must make choice of one of these elders to act as his deputy in his absence. The chiefs, or their deputies, have very great authority in their tribes. In some respects, their government is milder than that possessed by the inhabitants of towns, as it somewhat resembles that of a father over his family; but, in other respects, it is much more severe, resembling that of an officer, or rather of a court-martial, over soldiers. A great deal is left to depend upon the character and dispositions of the chief or of his deputy; but, in general, they should do nothing to weaken the regard and attachment of the tribes. Common cases are determined by the governor, merely by his own judgment; but,

when the case is of very great importance, the elders of the tribe meet, and, after they have considered the matter, they determine upon that on which the greater number are agreed. This may, at the first view, seem to be something like a jury. But there are great differences: the council consists of the principal persons of the tribe, and then they decide not according to what *all* agree to, but according to what the greatest number agree to. But there is a greater difference still, which is, that whereas, among ourselves, every man may be tried by a jury of his equals—among these Tahtars none but persons of consideration have any right to have their cause heard before a council of elders. Yet this is a favourite way of trial among them, and they scarcely ever murmur at a sentence of a council, whatever it may be. For this reason, the governor sometimes calls a council to consider matters which he might decide by himself if he pleased; either because it is a question he does not like to determine, or because he wishes to render himself popular by granting this way of trial to those who cannot demand it as a right.

Among the tribes, a criminal is seldom put to death by the sentence of the governor, even

when he deserves to die. If it be thought that his crime deserves to be punished with death, he is not executed by the officers of justice, but he is given up to the party he has wronged, who is at liberty either to kill him, to oblige him to redeem his life at a fixed price, or to pardon him altogether.

In order to keep peace in the tribe, the chief and council always endeavour to persuade the person who is wronged to make up the difference for a price, without shedding the blood of the criminal, because the Tahtars are exceedingly revengeful when one of their family has been killed, and they have no rest till they have taken away life in return; then the other party considers itself bound to avenge that murder, and so it goes on without end. The same thing happens when the judges endeavour to screen the criminal; or when he is so proud or powerful that he refuses to submit or to make amends. In short, whenever, in any way, a settlement is prevented, the injured family thinks itself disgraced till it has had its revenge; then comes the revenge of the other party, and thus the families often go on reciprocating slaughter for seventy or a hundred years. Under this unhappy system, the children

and near relations of the offender are as liable to be slain as himself.

A Persian manuscript gives the following modern and very striking example of the operation of this practice: "In the time of the Shah Sultan Hossein, Kassim Khan Shuftee slew Aga Kumal, governor of Resht, whose son, Aga Jumal, slew Kurreem, the son of Kassim, who had murdered his father. Aga Raffeah, the brother of Kassim, slew Aga Jumal, and avenged his nephew. Hedayet Khan, the son of Aga Jumal, slew Aga Raffeah and five of his brothers and nephews: a child, called Aga Ali, the son of Kassim, was the only person of the family of Shuftee that was preserved. Hedayet Khan, desiring to employ the tribe of Shuftee, was compelled to put this child at their head, as they refused to serve except under one of the blood of their chief. Eventually, Aga Ali made his escape; and, when he had reached the age of sixteen years, he was aided by Aga Mohammed Khan, (the king of Persia,) in an attempt to avenge his father, uncle, and brother. He succeeded in taking Hedayet Khan, whom he slew. Two of that chief's sons, Hossein Ali, and Futteh Ali, were sent to the Persian court, and, when the present (late) king ob-

tained the throne, he gave the former a small force to endeavour to recover Ghilan. This chief ordered two of his men to conceal themselves in a wood, to assassinate Aga Ali, as he passed along a road in their vicinity. In this they were successful, and the relations of the slain chief, alarmed at his fate, fled to the island of Lankeroon, (in the Caspian Sea,) and claimed the protection of Mustapha Khan Talish. The reigning monarch invited them to return to their family possessions of Shuft. On his sending a sealed Koran, as the most sacred of all pledges, they came back. But they thought of nothing but revenge. Day and night they watched the movements of Hossein Ali; and, at last, one of the brothers of Aga Ali succeeded in shooting him as he was riding along the road." "There has yet," the writer of this account states, "appeared no man of courage among the descendants of Hedayet Khan; but the murdered Hossein Ali has left an infant son, and if this boy," he adds, "prove worthy of his family, he will, doubtless, avenge the blood of his father." This manuscript was dated in 1810, so that this blood feud had already lasted seventy years.

In such cases the king never considers him-

self bound to interfere to forbid, like David, "the revengers of blood to destroy any more," (2 Sam. xiv. 11.) The right of avengement, however, devolves upon the legal heir of the deceased, and should that heir be a child, the king may interfere, if he can or if he like, to prevent the vengeance from being pursued till that child becomes of age.

These blood quarrels, as they are called, are the things which most seriously disturb the peace of a tribe: and, when such affairs happen between persons of different tribes, they are still more serious, as then the entire tribes often get involved in the quarrel. It is thus seen that there is abundant reason why the chiefs and councils should be very anxious to prevent bloodshed; particularly now when they know that the sovereign likes nothing better than to see them weaken one another by quarrels of this sort, or any sort.

This bad way of going on could only be prevented by making the law strong, that is, by making the punishment of a criminal not the act of a private person, but of the public; and by depriving the offended person of any power over the fate of the offender. Then, on the one hand, there would be no room for

private grudges between the different parties; and, on the other, there would be no temptation to allow a criminal to escape with insufficient punishment. Precisely the same practices existed among the Jews before the Law was given by Moses; and we see in Num. xxxv. 9—35, Deut. xix. 1—13, the means provided in the wisdom of God for the correction of its monstrous evils. Towns were, at convenient distances throughout the country, constituted as cities of refuge. To the nearest of these, a man who had committed accidental homicide, fled with all speed from the next of kin, on whom the usage of pastoral tribes conferred the right, or rather duty, of avenging the blood of the slain upon the head of the slayer. If the avenger could overtake the homicide before he reached the town of refuge, (and, from the nature of things, this could rarely if ever happen,) he might exercise his right of vengeance without being amenable to public justice for the act. But, if the slayer reached the town, he was safe till his case had been inquired into by the elders. If the case assumed the aspect of murder, the fugitive was denied refuge, and was dismissed from the place, and abandoned to the pursuing zeal of the avenger. But, if the

case were one of manslaughter, he was permitted to remain in the town—safely sheltered there till the death of the high-priest, when he quitted the place free from danger—for, if the avenger *then* molested him, he would become amenable to public justice as a murderer. If, at any other time, that is, before the demise of the high-priest, a refugee were found beyond his bounds, he might be slain by the avenger. By this method, most of the evils of the practice were averted, without any great violence to the long-settled ideas of this people.

Although nothing like this is to be found among the Tahtars, they are not without a kind of refuge. In fact, there is scarcely any nation of the east which has not some kind of asylum to which those who are guilty of a crime may not flee for shelter, if they choose to do so, or if they are near enough to avail themselves of it. Among the heathen, this is usually the temples of their gods. Among the Moslems generally, refuge is afforded in a few of the mosques which contain the tombs of eminent saints, or imaums ; of which, among the Persians, the one at Koom is the most eminent and celebrated as an asylum. But there is among them another kind of asylum,

more singular and perfectly inviolable, the use of which is derived from the tribes. This is the *stable* of the king, and of the chief of tribes; or, rather, the head stall of the horse which the king or chief is wont to ride, wherever that horse may be. The person of any one who can get to the horse's head, and lay hold of his halter or bridle, is inviolable, whatever crime he may have committed. The tribes have always regarded this asylum with the most superstitious reverence. The direst misfortunes are supposed to befal any one by whom its privileges are insulted; and "a horse," they say, "will never bear the man to victory by whom it is violated." Nor is this refuge merely a temporary emergency, to avoid the first outbreak of wrath or vengeance, else he might be soon drawn forth by the denial of food. The Persian books say: "The monarch or chief at whose stable a criminal takes refuge, must feed him as long as he stays there. He may be slain the moment before he reaches it, or the moment on which he leaves it, but, while there, even a slave who has murdered his master cannot be touched."

Some further light may be cast upon the usages of the Tahtars in this matter, by noting

how they proceed in a case of murder. When a man has been proved guilty of murder, he is given up to the heir of the dead person, to do what he likes with him. If the avenging heir be a child, the murderer is confined till he become of age; for it is considered his proper business to avenge or pardon the death of his father. It is difficult to say whether the murderer is more generally put to death or allowed to purchase his life, because the practice is not the same among all the tribes: but, upon the whole, it seems that the criminal is most commonly allowed to purchase his safety. In every tribe men will decide the question accordingly as their avarice or their rage prevails: but there are some tribes that take a pride in demanding life for life, and in having it said that they never pardon the shedding of blood. In other tribes, people generally allow their own interest and the persuasions of the council to prevail over their thirst for the blood of the offender. It sometimes happens, however, that when he has taken home the criminal, with the intention of coming to an agreement with him, the wife or wives of the murdered person are so outrageous, and so clamorous for the life of the murderer, that he

feels obliged to put him to death, or perhaps to let them do it themselves. To us this seems most hideous: but it has often been observed, that among barbarians the women are more implacable than the men. Besides, they the rather incline to severity, because they are the principal sufferers by the loss of their husbands, and because there are no considerations of gain to incline them to mercy, as it is not they, but the heir, who profits by any agreement which may be made with the criminal. By the law, that is the Koran, such a person, allowed to ransom his life, should pay a hundred camels, and redeem a Moslem from captivity. In practice, however, the amount depends upon the rank of the party slain, and of him who committed the offence, as well as on the means which the murderer may possess of paying, and the power which the heir has of exacting. It often happens that the heir, besides demanding money and cattle, requires that one or more of the nearest female relations of the murderer should be given as wives to himself and the principal relations of the deceased. As this plan creates ties of kindred between those who were before inveterate enemies, it is considered a very advantageous way of settling the differ-

ence. But in this case, not only does the husband not give any money to the father of the woman, according to the usual custom, but he is not obliged to make any provision for her in case of his own death. Thus the poor women are the principal sufferers in the matter.

It will be asked, What is done in case the man is too poor to make any payment? It is painful to state that such a man is more likely to be put to death for his crime than one who can pay. However, in the case of such a man, a sum is often fixed, which he must raise as he can; if he cannot raise it otherwise, they oblige him to wear an iron collar, and to beg from every person he meets, till he has collected the amount.

It does sometimes, but not often, happen, that a man who has committed a murder throws himself upon the mercy of the murdered man's family. The rarity of such an occurrence arises from the pride which makes them consider it so degrading to ask forgiveness, that they will seldom do it, even when commanded and entreated by their superiors. Nor need we wonder at this; for the same thing in kind, if not in degree, occurs daily among ourselves; and is, indeed, but one aspect of that

manifestation of the old Adam within us, which makes us often, at one time of our Christian experience, reluctant to come before God in our sin, and accept free pardon from his grace, although we know that the Redeemer, by whose blood that pardon was bought, sits at the Father's right hand to intercede irresistibly for us.

When a man among the tribes who has slain another is, however, brought to take the step of throwing himself upon the mercy of the slain man's family, he ties a sword around his neck with a black cord, and in that manner goes to the heir, and tells him that he has come to receive his doom from him. The avenger may then kill the man if he choose; but there is a point of honour among the tribes which almost always prevents him from putting a man to death who comes to him in this humble manner.

CHAPTER III.

PASTORAL AND AGRICULTURAL USAGES.

Some of our readers may require us to explain how it is that we have sometimes spoken of the Tahtars as "wandering tribes," and said that they ramble about from place to place; yet that we have mentioned their districts, and the territories of their chief.

It must be understood that each of the tribes has a large district, within which it moves about from place to place in summer, but cannot well go beyond it, because then it would get into the lands of another tribe, and that tribe would not like it. How they came by the lands they possess does not clearly appear; but it seems that each tribe, when it entered the country, had a certain portion of land allotted to it, on which to graze its flocks; and though it was not, perhaps, intended at first that they should stay there and keep

possession ; yet, having done so for a long time without being disturbed, they came at last to consider that they had a right in the land with which no one ought to interfere.

There is plenty of room for them in a country so large and so thinly peopled as Persia, and the range of many of the tribes extends over much land, containing several valleys and mountains. As already stated, no tribe will, on any account, allow another to enter their boundaries if they can help it : and the disputes between tribes about the right to a particular tract of land, or to a spring or well of water, sometimes produce bloody quarrels, which, like those about murder, are carried on for many generations. These facts may forcibly remind us, and do, indeed, strongly illustrate the strife between the herdsmen of Isaac and Abimelech about wells of water ; and still more those contests between the herdsmen of Abraham and Lot respecting pasturage, which at length constrained the separation of friends and relatives who had so long dwelt together.

To many it may still be difficult to understand what sort of right they have in these lands. Are they, it may be asked, what we

call "land-owners;" or is it that they merely have the right to lead their flocks about and feed them on these lands? Neither of these is quite right. They are certainly not what we call "land-owners;" but they are at liberty not only to feed their flocks on the lands, but to cultivate the ground which has not before been cultivated by others, and even to build villages and towns within their districts.

It is not, however, to be supposed that they are permitted to derive all these benefits from land for nothing. It is true that they do not pay money for it; but in return for these advantages, they are obliged to send a certain number of horsemen to serve the king in his wars. Besides this, they also generally pay a small tax on their flocks. This tax is not paid in money, of which they have very little, but in sheep, butter, cheese, and such other commodities as the produce of their flocks enables them to furnish. It is not in our recollection that the Scriptures afford any evidence that the patriarchal fathers, mentioned in Scripture, rendered any military service to the sovereigns in whose territories they abode; but it may be because Palestine was cut up into petty princedoms, none of which were

singly sufficiently powerful to enforce such an obligation. The only facts that seem at the first view to bear on the subject, are those related in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, where we see Abraham, in conjunction with some native chiefs, pursuing and routing the invaders of the land, and afterwards sending up a proportion of the spoil to another native prince, named Melchizedek.

Neither do we read of any regular tribute; and that, probably, for the same reason—for that a tribute of both kinds did exist, when there was power to enforce it, there is every reason to believe. That, if any such tribute as the latter existed, it was paid in the same manner, there can be no doubt. We read in 2 Kings iii. 4, that Mesha, king of Moab, who "was a sheepmaster," rendered his tribute to Ahab, king of Israel, in the shape, not of money, but of "an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool."

It will appear from what has been stated, that the wealth of the Tahtar chief consists in his more numerous flocks; besides which, he, as chief, receives a small contribution from his people; as this partly comes from their own

free-will, the amount depends very much upon the degree in which the chief is either loved or feared by his tribe. In this we have an apt illustration of the treatment which Saul at first received after his election to the kingdom. The great body of the chiefs despised him, and brought him "no presents," in consequence of which he continued to live quite a private life. But, as soon as he had been enabled in the affair at Jabesh to display the warlike qualities which he undoubtedly possessed, the usual presents and free-will tributes poured in upon him, and he was able to assume and maintain the state of a king, 1 Sam. xi.

Let us now attend to the manner in which the Tahtars change their place of abode, when the flocks having eaten up all the grass in one place, to seek for more. But they cannot go wherever they like. Not only has every tribe its distinct domain, but every branch of that tribe has its district also, so that it is always known where next to go without interfering with other parties of the same tribe. As soon as the grass is consumed in the place where the tribe is encamped, the elder appoints a time for them to remove. They go only a few miles at a time, if grass can be found so near; and thus,

although in the course of the season they go a considerable distance, they do so very gradually. In fact, they make a regular tour every year out from their winter abodes and back to them again; and they so regulate their tour that, as the summer advances, and the heat increases, they go higher up; and as the winter approaches, and the cold increases, they go lower down, by which means they always enjoy the most temperate climate that can be had within the limits. Their course of proceeding in the summer time is easily understood. They then seek the higher and cooler regions, where the soil is naturally richer, and the herbage is not burned up. But their plan of operation varies in winter with circumstances, and needs a more particular description. Their plans are determined chiefly by the nature of the locality in which they happen to be placed. In the warmest parts of the country, where the winter is mild, they remain in their tents all the year round. Some other tribes do not dwell in tents at all, but occupy small wooden houses, that can be carried about almost as easily as a tent, and which serve as well for winter as for summer. Others build huts for their winter residences, which they abandon when the

winter is over; but generally return to them the next winter to prevent the necessity of building huts every year. When this is the case, they generally sow a little corn before they begin their wanderings again, and leave a few old persons to look after it. When they thus begin to cultivate they gradually go on increasing the cultivation, and as it increases more people stay behind to attend to it, until at last nearly the whole of them stay at home all the year, only sending out a few with the flocks in the fine season. It is scarcely necessary to point out how remarkably these particulars agree with, and illustrate many circumstances, in the history of the patriarchs: the frequent changes between the warm southern plains of Beersheba and the comparatively cool, and even in summer, fertile environs of Hebron (Mamre); the sowing of the ground by Isaac, and probably Jacob; the occasional residence in "booths" and houses, as well as in tents; and the final condition, like Laban, Job, and eventually Lot, of having fixed residences, while the flocks are sent out under the charge of shepherds.

In the last condition of Tahtar life, the tribes are "wandering tribes" no more, but they are

still tribes, governed in the same manner as before, and attached in the same way to their chiefs. The fact is, that in times of quiet they thus gradually become settled and cultivate the ground; but when times of trouble come they give up their villages and cultivation, and hasten to their tents again. It was the same among the Jews of old. In times of trouble, they forsook their towns and villages for tents, so that, "To your tents, O Israel!" was the common cry of rebellion among them. Thus the number of those who wander diminishes every year in quiet times, and increases again in times of war and trouble. It is difficult to form a correct notion of the proportion which these Tahtar tribes bear to the settled inhabitants in such a country as Persia. It is commonly said that the number of the persons belonging to the tribes is nearly half the entire population of the Persian dominions; but a gentleman who has resided many years in Persia, and is better acquainted with the country than any person now living, informed us that at present the proportion of those who actually wander does not exceed one-fifth of the whole population.

It is easy to understand how those who cul-

tivate the ground near the villages can provide for their cattle in winter: but it may not be so clear how the others do so. Some of them —those who inhabit the warm parts of the country, and remain in their tents during the winter—then trust to the natural pasturage as they do in summer: and those who neither cultivate the ground, nor dwell where they can get pasturage in winter, cut grass in the mountains during the fine season, and store it up for future use. The migration of these people within the winter and summer stations, with the flocks and herds, must necessarily much resemble those similar removals of the patriarchs of which we read in Scripture; and on that and other accounts these migratory parties were always regarded by us with strong and curious interest, when we sometimes fell in with them in our various journeys. When the elder has appointed a place—seldom more than a few miles distant—to which they are to remove, they get up early in the morning, and take down their tents, and pack up their pots, boilers, boxes, clothing, carpets, and whatever else they possess, and bundle it all up, without much order, upon their beasts of burden. In Persia, as in Arabia, camels, but more com-

monly horses, mules, or asses, and sometimes buffaloes, are employed in this service. All this takes much less time than one would suppose; for their movables are very few, and such as are easily packed away. Every one is ready to start about sunrise, when they move off in a body. The sheep, goats, and unladen cattle are generally driven separately and slowly, that they may graze upon the way. And here we may point out a remarkable circumstance which appears to us of great interest for the illustration of Scripture. We *drive* our flocks, and if there be any *leader*, it is the sagacious ram who takes the lead, probably as best able, in his own opinion, to understand and act upon the intimations received from behind. Although this may do in the hedged-up roads or well-beaten tracks of European countries, it will not answer in traversing the often pathless commons of the east. The shepherd best known to the flock, therefore, marches before it, and it follows him. This explains, what seems strange to our notions, that the shepherd is, in Scripture, described as *leading*, not *driving*, his flocks, and in particular elucidates that beautiful passage, "He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him," John x. 3, 4.

From the deep interest we feel in this people, we cannot but pray that the day may arrive very soon when the good Shepherd's voice may be heard among these wilderness pastures, calling his own sheep by name, and leading them forth to richer pastures, and beside purer waters, where their happy rest, under His care, shall only be broken by the songs of salvation, and by cries of "How great is his goodness!" and "How great is his bounty!"

Resuming the account of the migrations, we next observe that those who have charge of the tents commonly go on a little a-head, and, arriving first at the appointed ground, hasten to set up the tents, so that by the time the whole party has come up their habitations are nearly ready for them. How the children were moved in the patriarchal migrations was often suggested to our mind on beholding that, upon some of the huge bundles of baggage with which the beasts were laden, were mounted the children not old enough to go all the way on foot, and not so heavy as greatly to increase, by their weight, the burden of the beasts. There,

at the same time that they enjoyed the pleasure and comfort of a ride, they made themselves useful by driving on the other beasts of burden. The younger children rode, some of them in the same manner, perched upon the top of a heap of luggage, all alone, and taking care of themselves, not receiving or asking for any particular attention from their parents or elder brothers and sisters. This was, in fact, the case with mere infants unable to speak. No part of the procession used to amuse us half so much as to see these little creatures clinging firmly with their small hands to their seats, like so many monkeys, while their careful and sure-footed beasts crept cautiously along the steep and slippery paths in the mountains. We may, however, count another circumstance as among the more amusing features of these cavalcades. When the Tahtars happen to have any poultry—and they seldom have much—they put them into wicker baskets for the journey, which are carried by an ass. The cock, however, is seldom shut up with the hens, but is allowed to ride outside upon the top of the basket, not at all confined. These Tahtar cocks appeared to us to have made very fair progress in the great Tahtar accomplish-

ment of riding : for they not only seemed quite at their ease as they stood over their families, while the ass jogged along, not in the least disturbed by the bustle and pushing that sometimes took place around them, but appeared to manifest much pride and satisfaction, by flapping their wings, lifting up their throats, and crowing with all their might. Sometimes, also, they amused themselves by jumping or flying to the baskets of other animals than those to which they belonged ; but always soon returning to keep watch over their own establishment.

As to the mere babes, they are, of course, carried by the mothers, who either trudge along on foot, or else sit, nursing their infants, mounted upon such animals as are the least heavily burdened with luggage. The young men and women go on foot, and make themselves very useful, being continually hurrying and bustling about, and, with the assistance of their large and fierce dogs, keep the larger and more lively animals from straying too far. Meanwhile, the men of the tribe, well armed, in the usual manner, with guns at their backs, daggers in their girdles, and sticks in their hands, march steadily along by the sides and

in the rear of the rest, guiding and controlling the movements of the procession, and in readiness to defend their families and property from danger.

More than once have we stood in a valley, and, looking up, viewed such a procession as is here described creeping along a narrow path in the side of the mountain above. In these removals, the very old people who cannot walk are carried on those beasts which are lightly laden with luggage; and many of them, in second childishness, and bent double with age, can hardly be distinguished from the mass of rags which forms their seat. Here they are carefully and tenderly, but not officiously, watched and cared for by their sons; for it must be said of this people that they are eminent for the force of their natural affection; or, in other words, for the reciprocal affections of sons to their parents and to each other. Instances of strong attachment might be produced, such as have never been exceeded among any people. The following is one of the number :—

Toward the end of the last century Persia was governed by a just king, named Kurreem Khan, whom the Persians regard, with reason,

one of the best kings they ever had. This king heard one day that twelve men had been robbed and murdered under the very walls of Shiraz. The criminals could not for a long time be discovered, but Kurreem Khan, who earnestly wished that security and justice should be established throughout his dominions, thought it of the utmost importance that these men should be found and made an example of; so he gave strict orders to the officers of justice not to give over the search, and threatened them and others who heard the cries of the murdered men with his displeasure unless they succeeded. At last, after some months had passed away, it incidentally transpired that the offence had been committed by a small branch of Kurreem Khan's own tribe, which was at that time encamped near Shiraz. Their guilt was clearly proved, and all who were actually engaged in the murder were put to death. Great intercession was made that at least some of them might be pardoned, but the king would not listen to any such applications, for he had vowed that every one of them should suffer death, and their being of his own tribe made him the more severe; for he said they had not

only disgraced him as their sovereign, but as their chief, and could not be forgiven.

When the criminals were brought out to receive sentence, there was a youth about twenty years of age among them, whose appearance much interested the spectators; but their anxiety was increased to pain when they saw the father of the young man rush forward and demand to speak with the prince. He was allowed to do so, and he then said, "Kurreem Khan, you have sworn that these guilty men should die, and it is just; but I, who am not guilty, come here to demand a boon of my chief. My son is young, he has been deluded into crime, his life is forfeited; but he has hardly tasted the sweets of life; he is just betrothed in marriage: I come to die in his stead. Oh, be merciful! let an old worn-out man perish, and spare a youth that may long be useful to his tribe! let him live to drink the waters and till the ground of his ancestors!"

The king was deeply moved at the old man's appeal. But he felt he could not pardon the offence. The crime was murder, and to check that crime in such a country as that over which he ruled, it was requisite that a terrible ex-

ample should be made. The king also considered his solemn vow, that all concerned in the murder should be put to death; and, with feelings very different from our ideas of justice, but such as might be expected in the chief of a tribe, he granted the father's prayer, and the old man went rejoicing and thankful to his doom, while his son, wild and almost distracted with grief, remained imploring the king to recall his decree, to inflict on him the death which he deserved, and to spare the more valuable life of his aged, affectionate, and innocent parent. But the king's word had passed. The old man died, and his son was suffered to live on!

Examples like these, of the innocent suffering voluntarily for the guilty, generally make great impressions upon our minds, and fill them with solemn awe. It is well if they do more. It is well if they remind us that we also have been under condemnation, and that any Scriptural assurance of life and pardon comes entirely from the sufferings of One who laid down his life for our sakes! In all these cases, the substitution redeems but one guilty life; but, in our own case, the dignity of the sufferer made his death sufficient for the salvation of the world—which

He alone could thus redeem, seeing that He alone was innocent. And yet, there is not one of the redeemed for whom the Redeemer does not, by that act, manifest his love as strongly as if he had died for him alone, and to whom every one is singly as dear—yea, far dearer, than was that guilty son to that afflicted father of whom we have spoken!

CHAPTER IV.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS—RELIGIOUS STATE.

We shall now proceed to describe some of the peculiar habits and sentiments of the Tahtar tribes, and their manner of life in the tents which form their summer habitations.

The tents of these people are different from those of the Arabs. They are so framed that, while they shelter them from the sun, they are partly open on one side, so as to admit the light and air. The covering, which is the principal part, consists of a coarse and thick black cloth, which is manufactured by themselves, while the sides, or walls, as we may call them, are made with rush mats, fastened to the poles which support the roof. Strong poles support inside the middle part of the covering, which would else sink down by its own weight. These poles are higher than those at the sides, for the sake of giving a slope to the roof. All the tents

in use among these people are not, indeed, exactly alike, but most of the Tahtar summer-tents which we saw during our journey were of this kind. Sometimes, however, the sides, as well as the covering, are of the same black cloth; and those who stay in their tents during winter, take down the mats when the weather becomes cold, and put up the black cloth in its place, if they do not use it all the year round. There are also some varieties in the shape of the tents. Some are very much like our own, and others are circular, with round tops, having much resemblance to bee-hives; but the latter are not very common. The tents of the chiefs and elders of the tribe are generally of the same shape and the same coarse materials with the others, only they are larger. It is, however, mentioned by Mr. Morier, that he once saw a round tent belonging to an elder, which was much finer than the common tents. Like others of this sort, it was composed of a wooden frame of circular laths, which was fixed in the ground, and then covered over with large felts, which were fastened down with cords, ornamented with tassels of various colours. But the greatest piece of finery was a curtain, curiously worked by the women with coarse

needlework, which was hung over the door-way. Curtains, instead of doors, are commonly used for the door-ways, even of Persian houses, in summer, for the sake of coolness. In the tents of the king of Persia, the curtains of fine needle-work are very magnificent things. Such are also used for the doors of the great mosques in Turkey.

Here, again, we are reminded of the extreme antiquity of many of the minute usages which are found in the east. When Moses was ordered, between three and four thousand years ago, to make a grand tent, to be used as a temple in the wilderness, he was told to make just such a curtain as we have mentioned for the door: "And thou shalt make an hanging for the door of the tent, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twisted linen, wrought with needle-work."

To return to the Tahtars: they generally form their encampments near some rivulet or stream, and if they are not strong they pitch their tents near the foot of the mountains, that they may be within reach of a place of safety when danger arises. See Gen. xiv. 10; xix. 17, 30; Judg. i. 34; Matt. xiii. 14. Their tents are usually pitched in squares. When

the party is large and there are many tents, they do not pitch them all together, but form them into groups at a short distance from each other. They are thus enabled to keep their flocks separate, and each obtains its due proportion of forage, which would not be so easy if they were all together. At the same time, the different parties are within call of each other in case of danger.

The horses, mules, and sheep are turned loose to graze around each encampment, or are sent to a little distance from it, attended by the old men and boys, and sometimes by the women. They almost entirely live on what their flocks produce, for the animals themselves they very rarely kill. They weave a coarse cloth for their own use; and when they want something beyond what they can provide from their flocks, they take cheese and butter, or sheep, goats, kids, cows, horses, asses, or camels, to the towns for sale. They thus supply the cattle which the settled inhabitants require, and receive in return corn, cloth, money, and articles of hardware.

There can be no doubt whatever that it was in the same manner, that is, by the sale to the townspeople of their cattle and their pro-

duce, that the patriarchs were enabled to obtain the corn and other agricultural products which they did not themselves produce, as well as the precious metals and jewels and movables which they possessed. There is an intimation to this effect in Gen. xxxiv. 21, 23, where to secure advantages, which this kind of traffic presented, with the encampment of Jacob, near Shechem, is held forth as an inducement to the people of the town to comply with the demands of Jacob's sons. "These men," said the chiefs of Shechem to their people, "are peaceable with us; therefore let them dwell in the land, *and trade therein;* for the land, behold, it is large enough for them." Besides, they are also not without manufactures for sale; the most beautiful of the carpets, which we so much admire under the name of Persian, or Turkey carpets, are made by these Tahtars; and if they were encouraged, by their carpets being largely in demand, they would probably, for the sake of gain, make many more of them, and become in the end an industrious people. This they cannot now be called, at least as far as the men are concerned: the women are very industrious. The men pass away their time in riding, practising their military exercises, and hunting; and they

delight to sit together in the shade, smoking their pipes, and listening to songs and tales, or in witnessing the tricks, grimaces, and jokes of Looties, or buffoons, who are to be found in every part of Persia, and are welcome wherever they go. Some of these Looties are very perfect in their art, and come near to the character which the Persians give of an accomplished buffoon, who, they say, ought to be able to laugh, cry, weep, sit still, and dance at the same moment! But it seems to be their chief delight to tell or listen to romantic tales; some of them not only learn the art of telling stories, but also get by heart a great number of verses, chiefly out of a long historical poem called the "Book of Kings," (Shah Nameh,) written by their poet, named Ferdousi, and which is full of romantic and warlike incidents, and fine descriptions of battles, which the Tahtars can highly relish and understand. A man who has qualified himself to recite large passages of this poem is much respected by his companions, and is often called upon to amuse an idle hour, and excite their minds by his tales and verses.

As this poem is much spoken of by most writers in Persia, and is, in fact, the most

splendid epic of the east, we may mention that it is a kind of history of Persia, extending over a period of 3,700 years, upon which is raised a stupendous monument of fable and romance. This work, which was composed between eight and nine centuries ago, under the patronage of Sultan Mohammed, of Ghuznee, comprises no less than sixty thousand couplets of highly wrought verse. It is wholly unlike the epic poems of the western world—and is, indeed, scarcely entitled to that denomination which it usually receives—being rather, in fact, an historical poem, heightened by fable; and is, besides its merits as a poem, the chief source of the knowledge which the people now possess of their ancient history. As a specimen, we give the scene—the lament of Feridoon upon his terrible disappointment of the expected return of his beloved son Eritch, (or Eeruj,) to whom he had resigned the throne of Iran, (Persia.)

"The king prepares. He quits the chair of state,
And hastes, vain hope! to meet his son elate,
The richest wines Irania's vintage yields,
And the gay minstrels charm the martial fields;
On elephants the drum and tabor play,
And splendid arches, such as grace the day
Of Persian triumph, all prepared to go,
When from afar, with solemn dirge, and slow

'Midst clouds of dust, a man of sorrow rose,
His face the picture of corroding woes!
Deep were his sighs; a golden urn he bore,
(With silk the head of Eritch covered o'er!)
By sorrow worn his livid face appears,
And all his cheeks were dewed with purple tears,
To Feridoon he came; the urn of gold
He groaning opens, dreadful to behold!
From his pale visage, and his faultering tongue,
The monarch feared some awful horror hung,
The silk around the head a servant tears,
The head of Eritch pale and worn appears.
From his high steed the fainting monarch falls,
And the whole sorrowing train on Eritch calls.
Sunk were his eyes, his face of livid hue;
Far different scenes his happier fancy drew!
Now they return; pale anguish led the way,
Torn were the colours, and the minstrel's lay
Was silent now. The universal grief
With ebony had marked each warrior's cheek.
No more the drum or flute's enlivening sound
Teaches the warrior or his steed to bound.
They all dismount, each soldier weeps aloud;
As when all heaven, by some tempestuous cloud,
Is darkened o'er. Their sorrowing breasts they tear,
All call on Eritch with a wild despair;
The stars, they cry, which marked thy fatal end,
Will change their course, and to thy murderers bend.
One truth attend, let not the meteor blaze
On this vain world, delude with dazzling rays;
'Tis vain, 'tis idle, a delusive dream!
Nor fancy fortune is as she may seem.
Sore grieved each warrior, and with anguish tore,
'Loudly lamenting on the sounding shore.'
The king to Eritch's garden bends his way,
Once the gay scene, resplendent as the day,
Where Eritch's hours in pleased amusement flowed,
Where social pleasure innocently glowed.
His father tottering with a weight of grief,
Bears the pale head of the love-murdered chief.

To the high throne he casts his swollen eyes,
No Eritch there, once favoured by the skies!
O'er all the garden lucid fountains played,
And choicest trees spread round their verdant shade.
Here gay pavilions, and here cool retreats,
Once pleased its lord. The mournful father goes
To where the edifice of Eritch rose,
And in his hand the pallid head he bore;
Grief sunk his soul, and all his bosom tore.
His loud laments, and agonizing cries,
Resound to Saturn, to the farthest skies;
He fires the garden—tears his aged hair,
Rends his wan cheeks, sad picture of despair;
Large drops of blood ran streaming down his eyes,
He dips his belt in sanguinary dyes:
On the lone earth he sat, and all around
The flames arise, and scorch the smoking ground.
Hope fled for ever; oft the head he views,
And oft to God his pious prayers renews.
Ah God! Divine Director! Power august!
View this pale head—now mouldering into dust,
Murdered without a cause, while tigers wild
Howl o'er the body of my darling child! "

Thus the men pass their days; but the women are almost always engaged about their domestic duties, or in making butter and cheese, or in weaving cloth and carpets. None but females of rank are excused from performing such duties. This may seem strange to us; but if we reflect, we shall see that the females of those patriarchal families, with which the Scripture makes us acquainted, are described as engaged in similar labours, whereas we do not hear of any occupation of the men beyond

those which the care of the flocks involved; and even these cares were sometimes cast upon the women, as in the case of Rachel, and of Jethro's daughters. We are not sure, indeed, whether the women among the Hebrew patriarchs were not expected to employ the degree of leisure which their duties might afford, in some manufactures analogous to those of the making of fine carpets by the women of the Tahtar tribes, and the sale of which might have added materially to their wealth. That, in any case, the Hebrew women, while the people were still in a patriarchal state of life, were skilled in, and used to, such manufactures, we know; and the obvious inference is, that this skill and industry, which were on one occasion employed in producing the various cloths required for the coverings of the tabernacle, and the dress of the high priest—some of which were of elaborate fabric and rich texture—had not been previously unemployed, but had been exercised in the production of articles for sale to the people of towns. It is in Exodus xxxv. 25, 26, that we find this information. We are there told that "all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, both of blue, and of purple, and of

scarlet, and of fine linen. And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun goats' hair," etc.

The lot of these Tahtar women, with duties so many, and so heavy, may seem hard. But let us not forget, that although our usages are very different from theirs, there are numbers of women in our cities and villages who spend their days in labour quite as hard, or harder, than that of the Tahtar females; and the difference between them is this, that while the lot of our own hard-working women is exceptional—for their friends and acquaintances may not be in a similar condition—a Tahtar woman is expected to do no more than all the women of her tribe do, and ever have done; and she grows up in the habit of considering these things as her duties, which it would be disgraceful to neglect. This practice among the Tahtars of making drudges of their women is not at all confined to them; it is common among all wandering people, as the Arabs, Turkmans, and Kurds; and also among all savage nations, as the islands in the Pacific Ocean. It might, indeed, be imagined, that they conceive themselves unhappy, when they compare their condition with that of the women

in the towns; and it is hard, indeed—hard as any that life offers—when unsweetened by the consciousness of possessing, in Christ, the love of a kind Father, who reserves in heaven a rich inheritance of rest for all the redeemed sons and daughters of toil. But God has so framed our being, that there is no condition of life without its comforts and consolations to those who are in it, whatever people in some other conditions of life may suppose. Nay, we may even believe that there are few people who do not really think their own modes of life the best of all; or if they are at first struck with the apparent comforts of another mode of life, they soon find out that it wants something or other which they possess, and the possession of which makes them prefer their own lot. An instance just comes to our mind, which has been mentioned by sir John Malcolm. It does not, indeed, refer to the Tahtars, but to the Arabs who live in Persia, near the Persian Gulf; but as there is not much difference between them in such matters, the story is quite to the purpose. It is this: "Some time since, an Arab woman, an inhabitant of Abusheher, went to England with the children of a Mr. Beauman. She remained in our country four years. When

she returned, all gathered round her to gratify their curiosity about England. 'What did you find there? Is it a fine country? Are the people rich? Are they happy?' She answered: 'The country was like a garden: the people were rich, had fine clothes, fine houses, fine horses, fine carriages, and were said to be very wise and happy.' At this her audience were filled with envy of the English, and a gloom spread over them, which showed discontent at their own condition. They were departing in this mood, when the woman happened to say, 'England certainly wants one thing.' 'What is that?' said the Arabs, eagerly. 'There was not a single date-tree in all the country!' 'Are you sure?' was the general exclamation. 'Positive!' said the old nurse; 'I looked for nothing else all the time I was there, but I looked in vain.'" This information produced an instant change of feeling among the Arabs; it was pity, not envy, that now filled their hearts; and they went away wondering how men could live in a country where there were no date-trees!

Now, surely, this in the providence of God, is wisely ordered. We should, indeed, desire to see people with so much knowledge of their

wants, and with so much feeling of their own defects, as might set them about improving as far as possible their social condition. Nevertheless, it is not for us to reprehend a habit of the human mind which seems to have been bestowed for the express purpose of making the Esquimaux as contented with his snows, as the Arab with his burning deserts.

Now, as far as regards the Tahtar women, it is far from the fact that they feel any discontent in comparing their own condition with that of the women of towns; on the contrary, they despise them with all their hearts. The truth is, that, notwithstanding their drudgery, there are no women in the east who enjoy so much consideration and so much freedom as the women of the tribes. In every country, usefulness is regarded, and therefore we find that the women in the tribes are much more respected than those of the towns, because they are of more use and importance in the community to which they belong. Another very important matter to them also is, that the men rarely marry as many wives as the Moslem law allows them to do. Most of them have only one wife; and very few marry a second, unless the first is old, or unfit to work, or does

not bear children. One reason for this is, that they are seldom able to provide for more than one wife; and another is, that if there were several in a family, it would not be easy to prevent differences among them. We may remember the quarrels of Jacob's wives. The difficulty is vastly greater than among the people of towns, because the women in tribes enjoy much more freedom than any others, and because they are more bold and determined characters. Thus marriage, which is at present regarded as the chief bond of union among the men of a tribe, would become a source of dissension, as the relations of a female will take her part if she has any cause of complaint; and their power of interfering is greater than among the settled populations.

The chiefs and other great men have often more than one wife; but they are obliged to act with great caution not to displease or provoke the principal wife, who, of course, is usually a Tahtar woman of rank and strong connexions.

When sir John Malcolm was returning from his first embassy to Persia, his mehemandar*

* One appointed by government to take charge of foreign travellers of rank during their journey.

was a chief of a considerable tribe, whose name was Mirhab Khan. During the journey, he paid a visit to the family residence of this chief, who, in introducing his relations to sir John, remarked, "My family consists of six children, of whom you have seen two; they are all (except one) by the same mother, the daughter of Futteh Ali Khan Afshâr, a famous chief, who, on the death of Nadir Shah (who you know was of our tribe) aspired to the throne. My good father-in-law, however, lost his life in the attempt to become a king, and I married his orphan daughter, an excellent woman, but who carries her head rather high, as no doubt she has a right to do, from recollections of her father's pretensions. Look," said he, speaking softly, for the apartment they were in was within hearing of the interior—"Look at that youngster, at the other end of the room, he is my son. His mother was the daughter of a jeweller of Isfahan. He is a fine lad; but I dare hardly notice him; and he is, you will observe, not allowed to sit within ten yards of the grandsons of Futteh Ali Khan Afshâr. That is all very proper," he added; "it is attention to the dam as well as the sire that keeps the breed good. Besides, the influence of females

among us Eelauts is very great; and if we do not treat them with respect, matters would not long be right." He was correct there; for matters cannot long go on right anywhere unless females are treated with respect. But it must be a miserable state of things where a man must show his respect to one wife by slighting the others, and where a father is afraid to notice his own son. We see much of this kind of feeling between Sarah and Hagar, and between the wives of Jacob, as well as in the ill-will and jealousies between the respective children.

The reader may desire to know something of what comes to pass in the event of a man belonging to a wandering tribe getting employment under the government, and becoming the inhabitant of a town. Then, of course, he takes his family to the town; and the women, notwithstanding their dislike to a town life, are obliged to give up their liberty and modes of life, and adopt the manners and practices of other women in towns. The wife who had shared all the husband's hardships and difficulties in the camp, loses, rather than gains, by his prosperity. He then takes other and younger wives, if he can afford it; for he has

not the same reasons to prevent him from doing so as when he lived in tents. The old wife then loses a great deal of her influence, although she is still treated with more respect than another woman would be in the same situation. If she has a son, all her hopes then turn towards him ; the claims of a mother being always, in all circumstances, respected among the Tahtars. Her influence over her son usually continues through life, and is commonly used with such discretion as to strengthen the claims which habit and affection give her. It is her duty and privilege to preside over her son's family ; and if he is rich, he generally not only leaves to her the choice of his wives, but is glad to have her to manage for them after they enter his household. In this way, a mother, regulating the domestic affairs of her son, has powers more like those which wives enjoy in England, than she had in her own situation as a wife. This is more or less true of all the mothers of Persia, and, indeed, throughout the east. For this reason it is that women in that country look upon the birth of a son as a more important affair than marriage itself. This is to them the grand event—the greatest joy of their lives. There is much in Scripture

to indicate that this was among the causes of that intense desire for male children which the Hebrew women manifested. There is, indeed, not much to show this in the patriarchal history; but when we reach the history of kings, we see how conspicuous the mother becomes, while the wives are unnoticed. In many cases, the mother of the king is pointedly mentioned by name, and, in more than one instance, she appears to have possessed much influence even in affairs of state. The king's mother, indeed, and not any of his wives, was queen in Israel. Thus it is stated that Asa removed Maachah "from being queen," on account of the encouragement she gave to idolatry, 1 Kings xv. 13; 2 Chron. xv. 16. This is still the case, or nearly so, in all the royal courts of the east. Among the Hebrews, however, the hope of being the mother of the promised Saviour of the world, gave the utmost intensity to that desire for male offspring which always existed in the east.

From what has been said, it will easily be guessed that a daughter is seldom very welcome to the Tahtar women. Every woman hopes for sons, and is much disappointed if only a daughter is born. She may not, perhaps, call

it a calamity; but if a girl is born, she only regards it as a trifling good where she hoped for a great one.

It seems, generally, that the manner in which the birth of a boy or a girl is received does not so much depend upon private feeling, as upon the habits and circumstances of a people or family. Wherever men are treated with much greater respect than women, their mothers will desire to have male children. But as nations become more civilized, women become more respected, and then people do not care so much whether they have boys or girls.

It is scarcely necessary to point out that there was the same sort of feeling with respect to the birth of girls among the patriarchs. This is, indeed, not ostensibly declared; but it is very clearly indicated in the emphasis of joy with which the birth of a *man* child is proclaimed, Job iii. 3; in the general silence respecting a person's daughters, when his sons are carefully named; and, in fact, a daughter is never named in Scripture, unless there be in the sequel something particular to relate concerning her. We may take notice also of the hopeful and exulting sentences with which, in Gen. xxx., the wives of Jacob hail the births of their sons; but

when Leah gave birth to Dinah, we hear nothing of the kind; it is merely stated: "Afterwards she had a daughter, and called her name Dinah."

The ceremonies of marriage among this people are somewhat remarkable. They have, indeed, considerable resemblance to those of the native Persians; but this seems to have been in a great measure from their having adopted some of the customs of the tribes, whose marriages, however, exhibit many usages still peculiar to themselves, being too much associated with their manner of life to be copied effectually by the people of towns. As these marriage customs offer some points of resemblance to those which are alluded to in the Holy Scriptures, we shall describe them somewhat fully.

It is usual to settle some kind of dower upon the bride. A marriage ring is in use; but it is not, as with us, placed on the bride's finger by the bridegroom, but is sent to her with considerable form, and presents are interchanged between the families. They also observe the usage of staining the hands with a red dye, called hennah, the day before the marriage, and, like the citizens, they dissipate

much property in their nuptial feasts. This was the case also among the Hebrews, whose marriage-feast lasted seven days, Gen. xxix. 27; Judges xiv. 12; but in later ages, it seems to have been sometimes extended to fourteen days, Tobit viii. 19; and even this limit is much exceeded among men of rank and wealth in the tribes, as well as in the towns—the festivity being often protracted to thirty or fifty days; while among the poorest, it lasts not less than three days—that period being requisite for the completion of the established forms. On the first day, the company are assembled; the second day is appropriated to the important ceremony of staining the hands; and the third day, to that of the marriage. Among all ranks, the bridegroom appears on his wedding-day in the richest attire and ornaments he can possibly obtain; as was also the custom among the Hebrews, whence the significance of the beautiful figure in which the psalmist compares the rising sun to a bridegroom coming forth from his chamber in the morning of his marriage-day, Psalm xix. 5; hence, too, the prophet describes not only the bride as adorning herself with her jewels, but the bridegroom also as decking "himself with ornaments," Isa. lxi. 1.

On his marriage-day the bridegroom receives the most obsequious attention from all around him; and he is treated with all the consideration and deference which inferiors pay to superiors of high rank. All who come to his presence sit below him; offerings are brought to him by his relations, and these are received with much ceremony by his friends, who, on that day, act as his servants. These friends we recognise also among the Hebrews and Philistines, in the "thirty companions" who were brought "to be with" Samson during his wedding-feast, Judges xiv. 11; and as "the children of the bridechamber," who cannot "mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them," Matt. ix. 15. Two of these friends are more especially appointed to be always near his person, and to carry all his orders into instant execution. These are called his right-hand man and his left-hand man. And in these, or the principal of them, we also recognise in the Bible, the person of "the friend of the bridegroom," of John iii. 29; and "the companion" whom Samson "had used as his friend," of Judges xiv. 20. When the bridegroom is remarkably bashful, or is a child, (which is sometimes the case,) these men act

for him, and greatly exert themselves to promote the hilarity of the wedding, which they much increase by the numerous tricks which they play upon his friends and relations. They pretend to receive the commands of the bridegroom, as those of a monarch, to seize one person, to fine another, to flog a third. These marriage pranks are usually preconcerted; but even when that is not the case, they never give offence, as instances of bad humour at a nuptial feast are considered of ill omen, and are of very rare occurrence. There was, we have reason to conclude, much the same kind of entertainment in Jewish weddings; for we are not to suppose that the amusement of such occasions was confined to such riddles as Samson set forth at his wedding-feast.

This takes place among the men at the house of the bridegroom. The joys in the house of the bride are of a more quiet character. She is bathed, perfumed, and arrayed in the richest garments the family can afford. She also sits in state; and before she leaves her own house, or tent, receives presents from many of her friends. When this ceremony is over, she is enveloped in a scarlet veil, or wrapper, and is then mounted on horseback, and conveyed to

the dwelling of her husband, who receives her at the threshold.

The above usages are now, with slight variations, almost as common among the citizens as among the tribes; but those which it remains to describe are still peculiar to the latter, and are intimately connected with, or, indeed, grow out of, their peculiar notions and habits of life.

On the morning that the bride is to be taken to her husband, her friends assemble at the tent of her father. If *he* be a chief, or elder, of a tribe, the bride is accompanied by all the horsemen whose attendance he can command. The party then proceeds, accompanied by music and dancing; and if the place of her destination be near, a circuitous route is taken, that the enjoyment of this part of the ceremony may be prolonged. When they appear in the distance, the bridegroom mounts his horse, and, attended by his friends, proceeds to meet the cavalcade. He holds in his hand an apple, or an orange; and when he is sufficiently near to be certain of his aim, he throws it at the bride with considerable force. Most of the marriage acts of this nature are in all nations symbolical; but the particular signification of this act we

were never able to learn. Much importance is, however, attached to it. All is silent attention from the time the two parties were in sight of each other, till the apple has been thrown; and then all becomes instantly uproar and confusion. The bridegroom has no sooner discharged the fruit than he wheels his horse round, usually with inconceivable rapidity, and rides off at full speed to his own tent, pursued with great ardour by all the horsemen of the bride's party, emulous to seize the fugitive bridegroom before he attains the goal; and he who succeeds in this object becomes entitled to his horse, his saddle, and his clothes. This, however, is only exacted when the party is wealthy; for among the poorer classes a few pieces of silver are paid, as a fine, to the successful pursuer. But the bridegroom is very seldom taken; for as it is a point of honour for him to escape, he is mounted on the fleetest horse the tribe can furnish, and his friends do all that they can to favour his retreat.

Another curious scene takes place when the bride reaches the tent which is to be her future home. The women who have accompanied her then gather around her and im-

plore her not to alight, while the husband's relatives also crowd about her, and beg that she will descend. This is the moment of her power. Every male of the family into which she is about to enter brings her presents, according to their ability, or to their regard for the husband. They also solicit her to give up part of the dower which has been agreed upon; and it not seldom happens that their solicitations on this subject are afterwards repeated by the husband himself. This to us seems ungenerous; but it is not so accounted by them. We do not find any clear parallel to this in Biblical usages—but something of analogous ideas may be traced in the parade which Hamor of Shechem makes of his willingness to give dowry and gift, without reserve or stint, to and for the daughter of Jacob, Gen. xxxiv. 12. That solicitations of the kind, on one side or another, were not among the Hebrews unusual at that critical time, and that they were not regarded as indecorous, may be seen from Achsah's request to her father, when about to depart for her husband's house, for an increase of dowry—a request received kindly by Caleb, who bestowed upon her "the upper and the nether

springs," Judges i. 13—16. The solicitation made to the bride on this occasion is seldom wholly ineffectual, as it would seem ungracious to be altogether inflexible on so exhilarating an occasion. She, therefore, commonly does give up some portion of her right; but knowing that the dowry constitutes her sole security against the possible ill-usage of her husband, or the accidents of life, she is seldom prevailed upon to relinquish so much as may leave her helpless, or more than may just serve to grace the occasion.

At such marriages, the men and women of the tribes dance. The dancing is peculiarly oriental in its character. They stand in a line, or ring, and join hands, while the music plays, and a person sings in just cadence with it, and the whole party joins in a rude chorus.

On such occasions, the chiefs of the tribes visit the tents of their followers, and by their munificence and cheerful participation in the mirth that is going on, materially contribute to the enjoyment of the nuptial festival, and to the maintenance of a kind feeling between themselves and their people.

The ceremonies which the tribes observe in the circumcision of their male children, and in

giving a name to a child, are not materially different from those of the other inhabitants of the land; nor do the customs of interment greatly differ as regards the great body of the people. But, in the funerals of their chiefs and warriors of renown, they keep up the striking solemnities of their remote ancestors. The favourite charger of the departed, bearing his arms and clothes, accompanies the procession; and it is usual for those who wish to show their respect to the deceased to send a horse without a rider, but with arms upon the saddle, to swell the train of the mourning cavalcade. Ceremonies of this nature afford many interesting suggestions. If we look to them closely, we see that they are essentially the same as those which the most civilized nations of Europe still observe, especially in the funerals of men who have held military rank; and such facts as the present serve to mark the original forms of such seemingly civilized usages, and to indicate the condition of society in which they originated.

Having said so much about the Tahtars in their social relations, we may now describe their personal appearance. The men are in general a strong and active race, about the middle size, short men being much less com-

mon than in the towns, nor are tall men very frequent. Their complexion is usually a light nut-brown; owing, as it seems, to exposure to the sun and weather, as the children are often very fair. Their deep, black, and restless eyes, with their rough hairy faces, and strong bold features, give them a rather wild appearance, and lead a stranger to form a tolerably just opinion of their hardy, bold, and rude character. Their dress somewhat differs with the season, and the part of the country which they inhabit. Very often their dress is like that of the common people in towns—the present people, in fact, within a comparatively recent period, having adopted a higher quality of the Tahtar dress. This consists of a shirt, a pair of very wide linen trousers, a very close-fitting long vest, girded around the waist with a thick girdle, and over this, in cold weather, a kind of sleeveless spencer, lined with sheepskin, and instead thereof, or in addition thereto, a kind of cloak, or mantle of cloth, with sleeves, into which the arms may, or may not, be inserted. The head is covered with a cap of black lambskin, with the wool outside, which has a singular appearance to those whose eyes are not used to it—and which is now in gene-

ral use throughout Persia. But, perhaps, the more usual dress of the Tahtars, on ordinary occasions, is a coarse cotton frock, generally blue, with large loose trousers of the same. The frock is short and loose, sometimes worn over a shirt, and sometimes serving for shirt and jacket in one. In cold weather, they wear a large heavy cloak, made of felt, into the sleeves of which they seldom put their arms—just as the Irish wear their frieze coats. Indeed, it often struck us, that these Tahtars, in other respects, bore no faint resemblance to the Irish peasantry. With this, they often wear the sheepskin cap; but the cap more generally worn by them, is made of white or grey felt, with flaps for the ears. Its shape is something like that of a pear, the large end of which has been cut off.

As for the women of the Tahtar tribes, they, when young, are often handsome and well-shaped. They have fine black eyes, like the men, with small mouths and white teeth, and a ruddy brown complexion. But in the east women soon begin to lose their beauty, and to look old; and on account of the hardships of their way of life, and their being exposed so much to the weather, this happens to the

women of the wandering tribes sooner than to others. We have, however, seen many good-looking middle-aged women, but a good-looking aged woman we certainly never saw. The men may preserve their good looks much longer than the women, and we have occasionally seen fine old men among them. The dress of these Tahtar women would, we fear, be deemed very unpleasing by English ladies. It consists of a loose shift, generally of coarse blue cotton. It is short, seldom coming so low as the knees, and is open all the way down in front, to below the pit of the stomach, being only confined at the throat by a button or string. Under this, they wear loose trousers of the same stuff as the shift; and their head-dress consists of a piece of cloth, which is placed so as to cross the forehead like a band, while it hangs down behind over the back and shoulders, and is sometimes brought round in front, so as to cover the neck and bosom. Over this, they roll around the head a large handkerchief, or shawl, which is commonly of a black colour; and this forms their turban.

When they leave their tents, they do not hide their faces like the women in towns; on the contrary, when travellers happen to be

passing, the women who are in the tents will come out and stand looking at them with much unconcern, without any attempt to conceal their faces. They will even talk with one if he speak to them, and will give water or milk if asked for it. This service we have often received at their hands.

They are civil and obliging to strangers, and any one who visits their tents is sure to be welcome, and to have the best fare they possess set before him. This may remind us of the hospitalities of the patriarchal tents, and may illustrate the reception which Jael gave to Sisera. Indeed, we always hear that the people who live in this manner are peculiarly hospitable to strangers.

It has been already stated that the men leave almost everything that we should call "work" to the women. It is their daily business to milk the cows and goats, to fetch water, to collect fuel for the oven, to bake the bread, to prepare the milk for making curds, butter, and cheese, and to prepare the family meals. This work generally occupies the morning, and part of the evening. About the middle of the day, they get some spare hours, which they employ in weaving carpets or coarse cloths.

in making felt, in sewing or knitting, in carding wool, or in spinning. Such duties as these are performed by all, except women of the very highest rank.

Some of our readers will wish to know, whether these women perform their sewing labours in the same way as it is done among ourselves? We cannot say that we took much notice of this matter; but our impression is, that they do not use thimbles, and we know that they have very bad needles, and that they sew all sorts of cloth with silk, instead of cotton thread. For this we can assign no other reason than that, probably, they cannot spin cotton fine enough, and at the same time strong enough, for the purpose of sewing. As to their spinning, we feel uncertain whether they spin with a wheel or not; but we think not, and certainly we never saw them do so. The way in which we have seen them spin is by means of a reel, which is connected with some silk, cotton, or wool, fastened at the girdle. This reel is spun round, and let fall, and as it goes towards the ground it spins out the thread; and when it approaches the ground it is taken up, the thread wound around the reel, which is then set spinning again, and so on till it has got as much thread

as it can carry. This is very slow work compared with our own ways of spinning; but still it is not quite so slow as might be imagined; for habit sometimes enables people to work swiftly, even with clumsy tools.

Our female readers will, probably, learn with some consternation, that the Tahtar women have no pins, nor are those little instruments, so important to themselves, at all known in the east. The women there keep their raiment together by strings and buttons; and, besides, their dresses are such as seem hardly to require the frail security of pins. Nevertheless, pins and English needles are exceedingly acceptable to the women; and if we were to visit these parts of the world again, we would take a great stock to distribute among them. It would not be very easy to distribute them, however: one occasion is in our recollection, in which, to gratify one woman who had been civil, we took out a case containing pins and needles, and gave her some of each. She was delighted. But, unfortunately, a young girl had observed this proceeding, and instantly ran away with the news, that there was a Frank giving away these curious instruments. Upon the receipt of this information, young and old hastened on

to the place where we stood, and we were soon surrounded by a mob of young women, women with children in their arms, and aged females, all of whom held out their hands with great clamour, and would not let us rest while they saw that there was a single pin or needle left in the case.

A circumstance related by sir John Malcolm will still further illustrate the habits of the Tahtar women. When sir John was once riding near some of the tents of a tribe, he expressed some doubts to a Persian nobleman, who was with him, regarding the reputed boldness and hardihood of the Eelaut women, and particularly of their skill in horsemanship. The Persian immediately called to a young woman of handsome appearance, and asked her if she were not a soldier's daughter? she said, "she was." "And you expect to be a mother of soldiers?" was his next observation. She smiled: "Mount that horse," he said, at the time pointing to one that had a bridle, but not a saddle, "and show the European envoy the difference between the girl of a tribe and a citizen's daughter." She instantly sprang upon the animal, and setting off at full speed, did not stop till she had reached the top of a small hill

in the neighbourhood, which was covered with loose stones; when there, she waved her hand over her head, and then came down the hill at the same rate she had ascended. Nothing could be more dangerous than the ground over which she galloped; but she appeared quite fearless, and seemed delighted at having had an opportunity of vindicating the females of her tribe from the reproach of being like the ladies of cities.

The food of these tribes chiefly consists of bread, sour milk, curds, and cheese; the two former of these being the things which are called "milk and butter" in the Scripture description of patriarchal fare; the sour milk, we confess, our tastes would not allow us at first to relish, or even to think of with pleasure; but it is really very refreshing when a person has accustomed himself to it. On great occasions only, a sheep is killed; and over the meat they seem to enjoy themselves, and to express as much satisfaction, as men fond of drinking do over their cups in England. They remind one of the "riotous eaters of flesh," Prov. xxiii. 20. When they intend to enjoy themselves, they make a pillau, or stew, of rice, or bruised corn; but this is less gene-

ral with them than with the people of towns.

We must confess, we do not think so much of the hospitality of any of the wandering tribes of Asia, as we did before we travelled among them. The truth is, that their hospitality is chiefly confined to wanderers like themselves. In travelling, they are obliged to rely upon one another for food and shelter, and it is, therefore, a matter of accommodation among them. But a perfect stranger—that is, an inhabitant of towns, or a foreigner—is in a different situation. He will, indeed, be welcome to such meat and drink as they are able to furnish, and they will give it to him with good will. If he be poor, he may thus, by travelling from camp to camp, make a long journey without a penny in his pocket. If he appear to have property, he will still be welcome, and his host will not molest him, nor suffer others to do so, while he remains under the protection of his tent. But when the stranger has gone forth beyond the bounds of the encampment, his late host does not consider himself bound by any principle of hospitality or honour from setting forth after him, and plundering him of all he has. The frequency with which this is done depends

upon particular circumstances; and especially upon the power, or impotency, of the civil government of the province in which the encampment lies. But it is often done, and the person by whom this enormity is committed is not regarded by his friends as having incurred any dishonour, or even committed any crime.

In regard to the *religion* of this people, our information is, in many respects, less complete and satisfactory than we might desire. They are, professedly, Mohammedans, and practise the leading rites of that religion. They circumcise their children at the proper age, and contract marriages according to the prescribed customs; but beyond this they pay little heed to the observances which the Moslem faith enjoins, and are in great ignorance of its doctrines. Mohammedans, generally, are a religious people after the fashions of their own system; but among these tribes there are no religious teachers, no books; and from their habits of life, and the manner in which they are brought up, their professed religion sits but loosely on them. They are in much the same case with respect to Mohammedanism, as with respect to Christianity any body of people would be, who

lived without religious training and worship, who had no teachers nor Bibles, and the sum of whose religion consisted in calling themselves Christians, and in regarding baptism, marriage, and death, as the only occasions for some kind of religious ceremony.

It is known that the worship of the Moslems is introduced by certain washings, as symbols of purification; after which various postures of adoration are assumed, and certain prayers and expressions of praise are recited in correspondence with these changes of posture. Among the tribes, if any aspire to a character for superior piety, they perform the washings, and put themselves, at the regulated intervals, into the successive postures of worship; but it is said, we believe with truth, that very few even of these have any acquaintance with the words which they ought to repeat, and that, in fact, they do not repeat any. This gross "bodily service" is the more easily passed off for the actual Moslem worship, from the fact that the prayers of that worship are seldom *audibly* recited. Sir John Malcolm states that he was in possession of a Persian manuscript, the writer of which relates many curious facts respecting the customs of the tribes. Among

other things, he states, that when a young man, he was "saying his prayers" at the appointed time of the day, in the presence of a person of the tribe of Shah Sevund. Observing that this man did not do the same, he asked him if he never addressed the Almighty according to the forms prescribed by the "prophet?" The reply was, "I now and then bend my head, and raise it again, as I have just now seen you do; but I repeat no prayers, and never indeed learned any."

The same Persian writer informs us that a citizen, who was in quest of a man of one of these tribes, to whom he had been useful in disposing of his sheep, when he began one morning, according to his usual practice, to read a chapter of the Koran, was assailed with a stick by his female hostess, who asked him, in a rage, if he conceived that one of the family was dead, that he thought it necessary to read that book? The husband reproved the woman for her violence, but told his friend that he should have known better than to anticipate misfortune, by going through a ceremony only used at funerals! We fear that there are many of this mind among ourselves. We know, from some experience, that there are many

who, although possessed of the Bible, regard it as a book of grief, and turn to its pages only in times when death and sorrow are in the house. On such occasions, indeed, the sacred book is very full of comfort to those who have made its blessed words their songs in the house of their pilgrimage; but they know but little of it, who know it not also as the book of joy—a book of glad tidings—the tidings of the gospel, delivered by the crucified Son, and sanctified by the anointing Spirit of God.

Although the tribes have no religious teachers, it sometimes happens that a priest, from some neighbouring village, ventures to the encampment, and calls the people to prayers. In such cases, he, as usual, takes the place of leader, reciting the prayers aloud, while the others imitate his changes of posture in silence. He is usually listened to with much impatience, and if anything goes wrong with the flocks while they have been attending this service, they load the unfortunate priest with abuse, and reproach him as the sole cause of their misfortune.

The Mohammedans are subject, by their religion, to nearly the same restrictions with respect to food as the Israelites were by the

law of Moses; and restrictive laws of this nature are, in general, found to be very rigidly observed, for the simple reason, that such observance constitutes a kind of righteousness, in which the natural mind, under every form of religion, delights; as it is so much easier, and has so much more external show of meritorious service, to eat this, and not to eat that, than to carry on the silent and unseen struggle within, which is needful to rule well the heart, and to subdue its ungodly impulses. And even where, as under the Christian dispensation, such kinds of observances are not enforced, we still find the operation of the same principle in the various cunning devices by which men strive to set up for themselves a righteousness of their own, and are loath to submit themselves unreservedly, and in entire humbleness of mind, to the righteousness of Christ, counting their own as "filthy rags."

We are, therefore, disposed to regard the notorious inattention of the Tahtar tribes to the restrictive laws of Islam, with respect to food, as one of the most striking indications of their indifference to that religion, and of the little real hold it has upon them, while they are nominally its adherents. It is true that they

do not *habitually* neglect these restrictions; for tribes of their mode of life, although the masters of flocks and herds, use but little animal food; and what they do use is mostly of their own cattle, which are all of kinds allowed by their law for food. The fact is only seen incidentally with respect to game, many kinds of which are unlawful to Moslems, but which some of the tribes eat without scruple. The hare, for instance, is an unclean animal to the Moslems, as it was to the Israelites, Lev. xi. 6; but when a man of the tribes has the good fortune to capture one, he will eat it without scruple. We remember a case in which some of these people, seen to be deliberately cooking one of these animals which had been caught on a journey, were reminded that Islam regarded the hare as unclean. "One of them answered, carelessly, "Ah, the mollahs* say so; but it is very good eating." An anecdote to the same effect is related by Malcolm: "On my return from Tehran, in 1800, I one day saw a hare near the encampment of some Afshar families: a number of young men sprang upon their horses and joined in the chase. One, who was well mounted and

* Religious teachers.

had a fine dog, rode very hard over some rocky ground, and his dog caught the hare, which he immediately tied to his saddle. I asked him why he did so? 'You cannot eat the hare,' I said, 'as you know it is *mukrooh*,' (or abominable.) 'Do you think,' he replied, 'that I would have hazarded my life, and half killed my horse and my dog, to be deterred, after all, by what some fool of a mollah has said, from eating this hare? I would eat his father,' he added, laughing; and rode off, delighted with his prize."

Animals which do not chew the cud and divide the hoof, such as the hare and ass, are also as unclean to the Moslems as they were to the Israelites, Lev. xi. 3; but the tribes have not the least scruple about eating the flesh of the wild ass, (the same animal so often mentioned by that name in Scripture,) indeed, they account it most delicious food; though, from the difficulty of capturing so fleet a creature, they obtain it but rarely. Properly, the flesh of this animal should be as unclean to them as that of the tame ass, which they never eat; but it is not so, the quality of the wild ass, as *game*, seeming to cause its asinine character to be overlooked. Those, therefore, who would

abhor the flesh of the tame ass, eat that of the wild one without remorse. It is, however, right to add, that the partiality to the flesh of this particular animal is not confined to the tribes; it is deemed worthy of royal and noble tables, though perhaps this, after all, may be a distinction without a difference, the princes and nobles of the lands being, as already explained, of Tahtar birth, and lords of the tribes.

If there be one thing more than another in which all Moslems are agreed, it is in that intense abhorrence of the hog which they share with the Jews. It is our belief that many would sooner die than taste swine's flesh. Yet even here, the Tahtar tribes are not exempt from suspicion. Hogs are nowhere kept tame in Moslem lands, but throughout western Asia they are found wild among the brushwood on the banks of rivers and lakes, and on the borders of morasses; and we have heard it mysteriously intimated by Moslem citizens, as a thing too horrible to be named or hinted at, that when the Tahtars sometimes capture a young hog, they do not always abstain from eating its flesh!

From these facts, taken together, it will appear that the Tahtar tribes are tolerably

free from the usual Moslem superstitions and prejudices, and are but ill-grounded in those exclusive doctrines by which the minds of the great body of instructed Moslems are studiously shut and sealed up against the influence of Christianity, to an extent which often makes a Christian traveller or missionary feel that there is, humanly speaking, more hope of the most besotted idolater, and of the most ignorant savage, than of the comparatively intelligent, grave, and decent followers of the false prophet. It is on this ground that we are strongly inclined to think that the Tahtar tribes offer to missionary enterprise the surest, if not the only door of access to the Mohammedan mind; and the writer of these pages, from the degree of knowledge he possesses of this people, feels that he should, with much thankfulness, hail the day in which a well-trained missionary should go forth to set himself down among them. He would be sure of more attention than among those who dwell in towns; and he would pour forth his message to minds less pre-occupied by blinding traditions; and less engaged by system to that opposition with which the natural man (Moslem or not) always confronts the humbling doctrines of

the gospel, and especially in that most humbling to the natural mind, of all doctrines, the great doctrine of the atonement—of salvation by faith in Christ crucified for sin. God works by what instruments he will; and when the day is come, even the tents of central Asia shall ring with the songs of Zion; and from them the voices of thanksgiving and of prayer shall ascend, like sweet incense, to the throne of God! We may not prescribe the agencies by which the Holy Spirit shall, in the appointed time, bring these great things to pass; but, speaking from human and spiritual experience, we should say the work would require a man of peculiar firmness of soul, force of character, and vigour of faith, with much humbleness of mind, and simple and hardy habits of life, joined to the possession of some kind of knowledge, medical or pastoral, which might render his presence an acquisition to the persons among whom he purposed to cast his lot. He should be prepared to "endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," and to make himself all things to all men; so that by gaining some, he might, with the blessing of God, effect a breach, small, perhaps, at first, but eventually, we might hope, large enough to

admit the Lord's hosts into the seemingly impregnable strong-holds which the false prophet has purposely built up against the doctrine of Christ. But the time is coming when "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh" at these strong defences; and with his word—and perhaps by means that seem impossible to flesh and blood—shall scatter, like chaff, that rebellion against the Lord, and against his Anointed, which has been so long endured.

CHAPTER V.

THE RYHAULU TURKMANS.

It is our object to describe, as well as our means allow, a condition of life of which little is popularly known in this country, and which appears to us to offer many interesting analogies to the patriarchal life of the Bible. With this general object, we are not confined to the tribes of one particular locality, but are at liberty to follow the race which maintains this form of life into any of the countries through which it is dispersed. It was stated at the outset, that the great Tahtar, or Turkman race, had spread its huts, under various names, throughout the settled countries of western Asia, maintaining relations with the settled inhabitants analogous to those which the Scripture patriarchs maintained with the people of the lands in which they sojourned.

Our statements hitherto have chiefly related

to these tribes as established in Persia—as it is with respect to their condition in that country that our information is most abundant, and as it is there that they may be contemplated in the most interesting aspect. It is, however, desirable to complete the survey by enabling the reader to view tribes of like habits in countries somewhat nearer to the lands of the Bible, where the circumstances of climate and produce—which necessarily exert a modifying influence upon usages and habits of life—exhibit a nearer analogy to those which the Scriptures offer. We will, therefore, look at a Turkman tribe established in Syria, and see what further information we can gain from the usages which it presents to our notice. The most instruction may be afforded by giving our chief attention to a tribe which has ceased to be exclusively pastoral, but has begun to give some attention to agriculture; as nothing is more interesting in this line of observation than to obtain analogies to the circumstances under which the Hebrew patriarchs were enabled to cultivate the soil in a land that was not theirs. We have, therefore, deemed it best to select for particular, but not exclusive, notice, the Ryhaulu tribe of Turkmans, whose winter

encampment is in the plain of Antioch, but who, in summer, retire to a district seven hours' journey north-west of Aleppo, and there cultivate the valleys, pitching their tents upon the declivities of the hills by which these valleys are inclosed. They have, therefore, not ceased to be a nomade people, although they have become, to a certain extent, agriculturalists. This is especially worthy of note, as the nomade condition of life has been generally supposed incompatible with agricultural pursuits; since the pastoral life exacts periodical movement on the one hand, and the exigencies of agricultural life demand fixed residence on the other. There are, however, two ways in which these seemingly inconsistent conditions may be reconciled. The one is, as in the case of Laban, Jacob, and Job, by sending out the flocks to distant pastures under the care of sons and servants, while the head-quarters remain stationary, so that agricultural operations are, or may be, carried on in its neighbourhood. The other is for the tribe to remove, leaving such agricultural operations as must be attended to in its absence to the care of slaves, or, which is now more usual, with the peasantry, whom war or oppression has rendered houseless, who are recom-

pensed in some way for their trouble. This last is the course followed by the Ryhaulu Turkmans. They appear in their winter quarters, in the plain of Antioch, about the end of September, and remain there till towards the middle of April, when the immediate inducement to their departure is the torment which the flies in the low plain then begin to inflict upon their cattle. They do not at once hurry off to their summer station, but move on gently, "according as the cattle .... and the children be able to endure," Gen. xxxiii. 14; and a stay of about a month is made at a place, about midway between the winter and summer quarters, where good pasture is found. Thence they proceed to their destination among the mountains of Gurun and Albostan, where they remain during the hottest summer months. In autumn, they repass the plains of Albostan, and return by the same route towards Antioch. Thus they are away from their agricultural quarters during the time of ploughing and sowing, but are there at the time of harvest. The grounds are sown about the beginning of February.

In the time of Burckhardt, to whom we owe much of our information respecting the Ryhaulu

Turkmans, they had not, for about ten years paid any attention to the cultivation of the land, and they had not, therefore, then, any plantations of fruit-trees, although the olive, the pomegranate, and the fig, would, probably, prosper well in their valleys. At the period mentioned, some of the principal persons of the tribe had already begun to plant a small garden of fruit-trees near his tent; and it was expected that the example would be generally observed, as the Ryhaulu families, at every returning season, pitch their tents on the same spot. In proportion as a people thus circumstanced increases its attention to agriculture, and has not only arable lands, but plantations of fruit-trees, which are of great importance in the east, the inconvenience of periodical removal becomes more and more pressing; and there is every probability that this tribe will soon settle permanently—if it has not already settled down among these mountains, sending out their flocks periodically in the care of shepherds.

It is said that the attention of this tribe was drawn to agriculture by their chief, named Hayder Aga, the marriage of whose daughter with a chief of some neighbouring Kurds, led

to such intercourse as enabled him and other influential Turkmans to perceive the great advantages which their neighbours derived from the cultivation of the soil.

The principal riches of these Turkmans still, however, consist in cattle. When we look to the account given of the wealth in cattle possessed by the patriarch Job, which made him "the greatest of all the men of the east," (Job i. 3,) we become curious to know what is now, under an analogous condition of life, regarded as constituting wealth. Burckhardt states that his host, when among the Ryhaulu Turkmans, was regarded as a man in easy circumstances, and his possessions in cattle amounted to four horses, three mares, about five hundred sheep, a hundred and fifty goats, six cows, and eight camels. There were few families whose possessions did not amount to about half as much as this, and there were "many" who had three or four times as many cattle. If there were "many" who had three or four times as much, there must have been a few with more still, constituting extreme wealth. This, in the absence of more definite information, we may, from the data before us, assume to be about six times as much as Mohammed Ali possessed,

namely, twenty-four horses, eighteen mares, three thousand sheep, nine hundred goats, thirty-six cows, and forty-eight camels. Compare this, in number and in kind, with the possessions of Job, which consisted of seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses. In mere number of animals, the highest supposable wealth of a Turkman chief—at least in this tribe—scarcely exceeds one-third the number of Job's; and the actual difference is greater, because the number possessed by Job comprises no less than four thousand five hundred of the larger quadrupeds—camels, oxen, and asses—whereas the Turkman's number comprises no more than one hundred and twenty-six large quadrupeds—horses, cows, and camels, all the rest being sheep and goats. In fact, Job had a greater number of the larger quadrupeds than the wealthy Turkman has of all kinds of animals together. Let us also observe that, in the enumeration of Job's wealth, there is no mention of horses, though he is described as having thousands of camels. It is improbable that he had any horses, as, in the early Biblical history, we do not recognise that animal among the pastoral or semi-pastoral

tribes. On the other hand, we miss, among the Turkmans, the asses and oxen, which are so conspicuous in all the accounts of patriarchal wealth. In fact, asses are now but little kept by the pastoral tribes of western Asia, and only by those who inhabit settled countries, as the animal is not well suited to desert-life and travel. Where kept at all, it is not in any considerable numbers, and is used much in the same way as by the gipsies in this country. For many purposes it has, among such tribes, been superseded by the horses. As to oxen, they are not now attended to by the pastoral tribes, although they figure conspicuously in the account of patriarchal wealth. Job's oxen were, it is clear, required for agricultural labour, for they are not only enumerated by "yokes," (i. 3,) but are actually described as engaged in ploughing, (i. 14.) This, however, is a use for oxen only demanded in the stationary condition of life—for we see in the case of these Turkmans, that the ploughing is executed by vagrant peasantry, when the tribe is absent with its flocks and herds. Yet Abraham, not less than Job, was rich in oxen, (Gen. xii. 16;) but that was only when he came from Egypt, and we do not know to what use he applied

them—whether he brought them up from Egypt to dispose of them at an advantage to the townspeople of Canaan, or employed them in agricultural operations. Although there is no record of the fact, the latter is not unlikely: neither is there any distinct record of Jacob's cultivating the ground; and yet that he did so is rendered probable, not only from the example of his father Isaac, but from the dream of Joseph, in which the twelve sons of the patriarch are represented as binding sheaves in the field. That he had oxen in considerable numbers we know, for "forty kine, and ten bulls," selected from his flock, formed part of the noble present with which, on his return from Padan-aram, he sought to mollify the wrath of Esau, Gen. xxxii. 15.

As our information respecting the qualities of the domestic animals of this part of the world is very scanty, the following particulars regarding the horses and camels of these Turkmans may be acceptable. The facts, so far, at least, as regards camels, are of illustrative value—the country being the north-eastern part of Syria, and the animals being such, probably, as the patriarchs were acquainted with in Padan-aram, and such as Abraham first, and

Jacob after, brought with them into Palestine. After long settlement in the southern part of that country, their camels, probably, partook more of the Arabian character than on their first arrival in "the land of their sojourning." Some of these facts may also suggest ideas respecting the trade in cattle carried on by the nomade parties of Scriptural times.

The horses generally are inferior to those of the Arabs of the desert, but are better suited to mountainous regions. Their necks are shorter and thicker than those of the Arab horses, the head larger, and the whole frame more clumsy. At Aleppo, and other parts of northern Syria, an Arabian horse of generous breed is only to be obtained at about twice the cost of a Turkman horse. There is now, as in the time of Solomon, a great demand in northern Syria for the southern breeds of the horse; and the enhanced price which they bear, even at this day, may help us to some ideas respecting the gainful advantages of that traffic in these horses which the great king of Israel monopolized.

At the time of their departure from the plains of Antioch for Karamania, the Ryhaulu Turkmans buy up a large number of buffaloes and Arabian camels, which, on their arrival in

their summer-quarters, they exchange for a better breed of camels, and for some other cattle for the Syrian markets. The Karamanian camel is taller and stronger than that of Arabia; its neck is more bent, and the neck and upper part of the thighs are covered with thick hair. The common load of the Arabian camel is about six hundred weight, but the other will carry eight hundred weight. The peculiar qualities and the greater strength of the Karamanian camel render it most suitable for, and most valuable in, the region it inhabits—as the Arabian camel is, in the same degree, better suited to its deserts. Hence, the former fetch twice the price of the Arabian in the Syrian markets, counterbalancing in the same markets the higher value of the Arabian horse. The Arabs themselves make no use of these Turkman camels, as they find their own breed, although less powerful in strength, much better able to endure heat, thirst, and fatigue, and, consequently, far more suited to the exigencies of desert life.

The camels of the Turkmans feed upon a kind of low bramble, called in Turkish, *kufan*, which grows abundantly upon the hills. In the evening, they descend the mountains on

which they browse, and come trotting, of their own accord, towards the tents, where each camel receives a ball of paste, composed of barley-meal and water, weighing about one pound. The expense of feeding these animals is, therefore, reduced to the cost of a handful of barley per day.

The milk of camels is of importance to the Arabs; but the Turkmans, who have that of goats—which the Arabs have not—neglect it. They do not milk their camels at all, but use them entirely as instruments of traffic and beasts of burden.

The carrying power which the possession of so many camels gives them, the Turkmans find various means of turning to account. They are thus enabled to carry on a very profitable trade with Aleppo. They provide that great town with fire-wood, which they cut in the mountains of the Kurdish tribes, about four hours' journey to the north of their own summer-quarters. The wood properly belongs to these Kurds; but the want of camels, by which they might convey it to the towns, renders this really valuable possession of small benefit to them, and they are obliged to sell their wood and their labour in cutting it, at a very trifling

price to their neighbours, who possess the means of carriage.

Besides wood, the Turkmans carry to the towns the produce of their fields, together with sheep and lambs, wool, butter, and cheese, in the spring, and a variety of home-made carpets. The profits arising from this trade with great towns are, for the most part, consumed in these towns—particularly in Aleppo—in the demands of their families for cloth, coffee, sweetmeats, and various articles of eastern luxury—so that they seldom carry back much, if any, money to their tents.

The tribe does not pay the usual miri, or land-tax, to the state, for the grounds it occupies, nor is there any kind of direct rent. But they render a tribute to the governor of the province, for the occupation of these grounds; which, as we understand, is the same that they paid for them before they turned their attention to agriculture; that is to say, the tribute which they paid as a pastoral tribe, in occupation of lands belonging to the state, has not been subject to any increase in consequence of their cultivating these lands; and their payment of the pastoral tribute exempts them from the usual land-tax on arable

lands. The rule alluded to as existing in Persia, and which seems also to have existed in the time of the Hebrew patriarchs, in which a right to land is acquired by finding water for its irrigation, does not exist here, the water being naturally abundant. The tribute paid consists of 6,215 piastres, paid in horses, cattle, etc. This is a very moderate sum, considering that the tribe possesses about three thousand tents, each of which contains from two or three to fifteen inmates; and, taking eight inmates as the average of each tent, the whole population of the tribe may be roughly calculated at about 24,000.

But besides this tribute, they are subject, like the tribes in Persia, and all other tribes, inhabiting occupied countries, to the obligations of military service. They can raise as many as from two to three thousand horsemen, and as many infantry—say six thousand men, fit for war; or, in other words, one-fourth of the whole population, being the usual proportion of men fit for military service. This corroborates the calculation by which we usually estimate the population of the Israelites at about two millions and a half, for the number of those of "twenty years old and upward, all that were

able to go forth to war," Num. i. 45, being about six hundred thousand, we multiply this number by four to obtain the entire population.

It eludes our research to discover whether any tributes, or obligations of warlike service, in defence of the country in which they fed their flocks, were incurred by the Hebrew patriarchs in Palestine. The only circumstance that bears this aspect is the expedition of Abraham in pursuit of Chedorlaomer's troops, by wh ch the land had been invaded. But this has every appearance of being a voluntary act on the part of Abraham in favour of his nephew Lot, who was among the captives. Yet, on the other hand, we see that the patriarch was joined by the native chiefs of the neighbourhood in this expédition, and that something like a tribute from the spoil was rendered to one of the kings of the country, Gen. xiv. 13—20. The truth of the case may be, that something like an obligation to join in any warlike operations for the defence of the country against foreign invaders was incurred by the pastoral tribes in the land; but that, as the aggressive incursion did not extend to the region which Abraham inhabited, but was confined to the countries

east and south of the Dead Sea and of the Jordan, the patriarch was not bound to act in behalf of princes who had no authority in the land he occupied, but did so of his own will on Lot's account.

Another trace of military action on the part of the Hebrew fathers in Palestine, is found in Gen. xlviii. 22, where Jacob makes to his beloved Joseph a special gift, or bequest, of some lands in Palestine, which he possessed by a peculiar right, having, as he says, taken it from the Amorite with his sword and with his bow. From John iv. 5, the site of this land is indicated; for it there appears that the celebrated well, near Shechem, where our Lord held discourse with the woman of Samaria, was "near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph;" and we know that it was in this neighbourhood that Jacob formed his first encampment on arriving in Palestine after his return from Padan-aram, Gen. xxxiii. 18, 19. The original settlements of the ancient patriarchs were not in that quarter, but in the south, near to and south of Hebron, where we find them in the time of Abraham, whence in the course of time they extended themselves by repeated encroachments north-

ward and eastward; and when the Israelites returned from Egypt, a body of them had formed a powerful kingdom on the east side of the river, partly out of territories of which they had dispossessed the descendants of Lot. The inference seems to be, therefore, that the territorial aggressions of this nation upon the domains of its neighbours had extended as early as the time of Jacob to the vicinity of Shechem, where it held lands, of which the local prince was not able to dispossess it; but that Jacob did so, and was thenceforth considered entitled to hold these lands in property, that is to say, exempt from the claims which lay upon lands not thus won by the sword.

We may return for a moment to Abraham, to point out that, according to the proportions already stated, his encampment must have been of much larger extent than thoughtless readers of Scripture may be apt to suppose. It contained three hundred and eighteen men fit to bear arms, and with whom he actually pursued the retiring forces of Chedorlaomer. This, multiplied by four, for the addition of women and children, gives 1,327 as the probable number of the persons of his encampment, and with the allowance of eight to a tent, would give the number of 171

tents. The numbers of both were probably greater, for the computation does not include the men too old to bear arms, and the average of eight to a tent is a high one. Well therefore might the children of Heth say to Abraham, "Thou art a mighty prince among us," Gen. xxiii. 6.

The tribe of the Ryhaulu Turkmans is divided into thirteen minor tribes or clans, answering to the great "families" of the Hebrew tribes; and, as among them, each tribe has its own chief, whose rank in the divan (or council of chiefs which directs matters connected with the common interests of the whole body) is determined by the importance of the tribe which is under his rule. The head of the most important of these divisions is also, in a certain sense, the head of the whole tribe. The chieftainship is not, therefore, as among the Hebrews and Arabs, hereditary, in the senior branch of the whole tribe; for as one sept or clan among thirteen cannot be expected always to maintain the first place in favour, a pre-eminence to which the highest degree of power is necessary must be liable to fluctuations. Yet it is less liable to alterations than one might theoretically be apt to assume, especially as

these tribes are less subject to the violent changes which frequent wars produce, than are those of Arabia and of the Tahtars in the Persian provinces. A clan, therefore, which possesses a marked pre-eminence of wealth and power at any one time, is likely to retain it for several generations—long enough, in fact, to assign almost an hereditary character, in the minds of men, to the leadership which its chief assumes. Thus, in Israel, the tribes of Judah and Ephraim never lost the pre-eminence among the other tribes which they brought from Egypt, and Benjamin never recovered the importance which it lost in the frightful slaughter at Gibeah, Judges xx.

The chief does not directly interfere in the internal affairs of the other clans; but, for general objects, his influence is great, and in the council, he is even able to overturn all opposition, and to carry out his own objects, in spite of the secret or avowed repugnance of the assembly. The extent of this influence of the chief depends much, however, upon his personal character. These, and other facts of the kind, are of much interest, for the light which they throw upon a very obscure subject, the internal organization of the tribes among the Hebrews—

the sum of our knowledge concerning which is, that each tribe, as a whole, had an hereditary chief, called the "prince of the tribe;" and that the tribe was divided into sects, or "families;" over each of which there was also an hereditary chief or elder: the relation of the parts to the whole—the manner in which convenient action was produced—and the degree of authority exercised by the chief—are the points concerning which very little is known, and illustrations of which, from analogous sources, are valuable. Among the Ryhaulu Turkmans the chiefs decide all disputes among their own followers; but appeals may be made from their tribunal to that of the grand chief, which shows that his superiority is not merely nominal, but is of a real and practical character. That justice was administered on the same plan among the tribes of Israel we know; and from the practical character which this gave to the authority of the chief men of the tribes, it proved to be unfavourable to that national amalgamation under the supreme authority of the monarch, which was found to be desirable when Israel ceased to be a commonwealth—whence the kings sought to supersede them in the exercise of their judicial power, by giving

it into the hands of one without hereditary power in the tribes, but well versed in the laws of Moses, and able to command respect by his character and abilities: while the right of appeal no longer lay to the prince of the tribes, but to the sovereign, and eventually to the supreme college of justice, which Jehoshaphat established at Jerusalem, 2 Chron. xix. There must have been some irregularity in the administration of justice by the tribal chiefs, apart from the centralization of authority, which became politically desirable under the monarchy—as even the prophet Samuel had been sensible of it, and had tried much to rectify it. But he seems to have found none but his own sons willing to incur the odium of interfering with the judicial prerogatives of the family chiefs, and their low character and gross malversation rendered the attempt abortive, and the authority seems to have reverted to the chiefs, until the monarchy became strong enough to absorb all judicial power. It is highly probable that the chiefs administered their judicial functions in a sort of rude manner, according to their own sense of right and traditionary usage, without much reference to the law of Moses—just as the

Turkman chiefs deal full justice among their followers without much regard to the Moslem law, although they endeavour to square their decisions with the very little of that law with which they happen to be acquainted.

The tribute payable by the tribe to the local government, does not form the total amount of its taxation. The grand chief has to be reimbursed the expenses which he has incurred in the public service, and which are sometimes considerable. These consist chiefly of the presents given to great officers of the Porte in passing through the camp, and of the expense of entertaining strangers of high rank, and towards whom the honour of the tribe requires that a princely hospitality should be exercised. The chiefs are required to raise the whole amount required for the tribute and for the grand chief, in their respective clans; and in doing this, according to the invariable custom of the east, they raise more than is required for these purposes, retaining in their hands the surplus amount, which is all, in fact, that they receive from their followers for exercising the sometimes troublesome duties of chieftainship. This is not in them an extortion, but is a known and understood matter;

and the amount is moderate, seldom exceeding four or five hundred piastres. It will be thus seen that the chiefs maintain themselves substantively from their own property, and have but little interest or emolument derivable from the wealth of the tribes they govern.

The ties of tribal connexions are seldom very strong when not fixed, as among the Hebrews, by territorial possessions. Hence, as among the Arabs, Turkman families, if discontented with their chief, pass readily into another tribe, without any one having a right to prevent them. This privilege renders a chief more cautious and more studious of popularity, than those tribal chiefs where people are fixed by lands and dwellings to the soil often think necessary. Any general dissatisfaction would speedily reduce his tribe to insignificance, or break it up altogether, and would in the same degree aggrandize and build up a neighbour, by causing many families to abandon his camp with their flocks and herds, and who are sure of a joyful welcome from any tribe to which they bring their strength.

The tents of the Ryhaulu Turkmans are not pitched in any considerable number together, but are dispersed over the whole district

which it occupies. Sometimes, five or six tents, containing as many families, may be found in the same place ; but in general the encampment consists of the tents of single families, which are met with at one or two miles distance from each other. These tents are not pitched exclusively in the plain ; indeed, in the hilly parts of their district, the declivities of the hills are preferred, so that the tents may be secured from the north winds ; and in proportion to the extent of arable ground, the hilly districts are better peopled ; that is, the tents lie nearer to each other than in the plain, where a thousand tents are scattered over an extent of the most fertile country, of at least five hundred square miles.

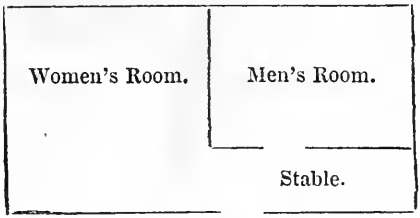
The structure of these habitations is, of course, extremely simple, and exhibits a combination of the hut and the tent desirable to a people of their mixed habits, but not usually possible in regions which the wandering tribes frequent, that is to say, only in districts where stones abound. In general, we have observed a disposition of the tent-dwelling tribes to avail themselves of whatever advantages their local position may offer, for giving a more substantial structure to their dwell-

ing than the curtains of their tents afford: of stones, in regions which furnish them; of leaves and branches, in places where wood can be found; and of bundles of rushes, in the vicinity of lakes, marshes, and rivers. So Jacob, in his first encampment, after his return from Padan-aram, at Succoth, at a short distance from the Jordan, on its eastern bank, made himself a *house*, and made *booths* for his cattle, the materials for such constructions being, in that neighbourhood, abundant, Gen. xxxiii. 17; but after he moved his camp from the neighbourhood of the river, we hear no more of houses or booths. There is reason to think that the Israelites availed themselves of such appliances, wherever they existed, in the places to which they came; and where the means existed it was worth their while to do so, as, during the forty years of their sojourning, they must sometimes have remained a considerable time, and in all probability returned frequently to the same station. The probability that they sometimes dwelt in booths is suggested by the fact, that during the annual feast of tabernacles, by which their pilgrimage was commemorated, they were directed to live not in *tents*, but in *booths*, constructed of green

branches. But for some intended analogy in this to the actual circumstances, it would seem to have been more convenient for the people, when they became settled in towns, to have had for their yearly celebration a tent which would have lasted for a whole generation, rather than to form a fresh collection, and new structure of green branches, every year.

The Ryhaulu Turkmans employ *stones* to strengthen their habitations. An oblong wall of loose stones, about four feet high, is covered over with a black cloth made of goats' hair, which is supported by a dozen or more posts, so that in the middle of the tent the covering is elevated about nine feet from the ground. The exterior walls remain, and serve the same purpose from year to year, giving a sort of fixed and local character to the habitation of the several families, notwithstanding their periodical removal with the more portable portions of their dwelling. A stone partition is also built across the tent, near the entrance. In every tent, the women have possession of the larger part of the dwelling to the left of the door. The smaller part, to the right, is appropriated to the men, and there is also a portion separated off, which

generally serves as a stable for a favourite horse of the master, or one of his sons.



Length from 20 to 30 yards.

The rest of the horses and cattle are kept in caverns, which abound in these hills, or else in separate huts built for the purpose. Many of those of the tribe who live in the plain near the river (Afrin,) take advantage of their locality, to have large huts, fifteen feet high, of the same construction and arrangement as the tents; but they are, instead of being covered with cloth, thatched with the rushes which grow abundantly on the banks of the river. This fact not only corroborates the observation we have just made, but marks another stage in the transition from the curtained tent to the house.

The larger portion of the tent is given up to the women, not so much from any view to their comfort and convenience, as for the necessity of

larger space for their culinary and domestic duties. It is not only the separate residence of the women, where they sit and work at the loom, but the kitchen, where all the wants of the family are provided for. This part is the *haram*, where no strangers or visitors enter. It would be a gross affront for any one to intrude into that portion of the tent. Yet it is stated, that when the Turkmans would render to a guest the highest honour in their power, they allow him a corner of the haram to sleep in quiet among the women. This is also the place for one whom it may, for any reason, be desired to assure of safety and concealment; for no one will venture into that part of the tent unbidden to seek him, without incurring the wrath, not only of the master, but of all his tribe. This may help to illustrate the conduct of Jael to the fugitive Sisera. She introduced him to her own portion of the tent, as an assurance of honour, of safety, and of undisturbed repose; and when the pursuing Barak came, although he suspected that Sisera was there, he did not venture in until Jael invited him into *her* tent, to behold the corpse of the man he sought, Judges iv. 17—22.

The apartment of the men is covered with

carpets, which serve as beds to strangers, and to the unmarried members of the family. The married people retire at night into the haram.

There is also, sometimes, even among this people, a kind of portable tent made of wood, like a round bird-cage, which they cover with large carpets of white wool. The entrance may be closed by a small door. Dwellings of this kind are used exclusively by the females, and they are only met with in families possessing large property.

The tent or hut of a Turkman is always surrounded by three or four others, in which live the Fellahs, or poor peasantry, who cultivate his lands, and who are to him, in some respects, what their slaves and other poor dependants were to the ancient patriarchs. These Fellahs are the remaining peasants of abandoned villages, or some poor straggling Kurds. The Turkmans furnish the necessary seed, and leave the whole care of the culture of the land to these peasants, who receive in return half the produce as the price of their labour. Thus the Turkman finds the seed and the soil, and the Fellah gives his time, his skill, and his labour, and the produce is divided equally between them.

A few of the Turkmans remain at the summer-quarters all the year round, to give out the seed, and to receive the produce. Thus the half-produce of the ground he cultivates forms the subsistence of the Fellah ; while the Turkman, besides his moiety of the produce, has another source of prosperity in his flocks and herds. The Fellah, by selling some proportion of his share of the produce, must provide for what other articles than corn he and his family require ; and, under the inefficient processes of agriculture followed in these parts, his moiety of the produce does not enable him to maintain his family in much comfort ; or, rather, the little comforts which he might realize, if he had fair play, are seldom allowed him. No sooner is it known, or surmised, that he has scraped together a small pittance, than the master takes it from him under the pretence of borrowing it, and he rarely sees any part of it again. Hence they live but wretchedly. The *best* dish they can usually afford is bad oil, with coarse bread. They never taste meat, except when they slay an ox or a cow disabled by sickness or age. The bulk of them live literally upon bread and water, and must do so until the extension of the culture of fruits and vegetables renders

their dietary more various and agreeable, if not more nutritive.

God has, however, in all conditions of life, made the earthly happiness and comfort of man independent of that which he eats, or drinks, or wears ; and hence the Fellahs, with all their poverty and privations, exercise much more real cheerfulness and natural kindness than is to be found among their haughty masters.

The manner of living among the Turkmans themselves is luxurious for a nomade people. Their tents are, for the most part, kept very clean and neat ; the floor in the apartment of the men is furnished with a divan or sofa, having only a clear space in the middle, where a large fire is usually kept up to cheer the company, and to make coffee, of which they consume great quantities. Generally, throughout the east, the cups from which coffee is drunk are seldom larger than our wine-glasses, and not more than one cup at any time is commonly drunk. But the Turkmans are quite inordinate in their indulgence in this luxury. Their cups are as large as our own coffee-cups; and whenever coffee is handed round, each person's cup is filled two or three times. Burckhardt declares that, when he was among these people, he usually

drank twenty or more of these cups of coffee in the course of a day. The servants, as is usual throughout the east, roast and pound the coffee immediately before it is used. They pound it in large wooden mortars, and handle the pestle with so much address, that, if two or three are pounding together, they keep time, and make a kind of rude music, which seems to be very pleasing to their masters.

Like other pastoral tribes, although the masters of abundant flocks and herds, the Ryhaulu Turkmans taste flesh-meat only on an extraordinary occasion, such as the arrival of a stranger, a circumcision or a marriage, or a nightly feast during the Ramazan. The case was undoubtedly the same among the Hebrews, not only in their pastoral state, but for a long time after they became a comparatively settled people. We never hear of meat except at high public festivals, at great sacrifices, at private feasts, or when a kid or fatted calf is killed to entertain strangers. Even the Israelites, when they sighed for meat in the wilderness, thought not of slaughtering their own flocks and herds, from which they might have been, for the time, abundantly supplied.

The usual food of the Turkmans is very much

the same as that of other tribes of the same habits and in climates not materially different; and it comprises nothing which might not have formed, and which probably did enter, into the dietary of the pastoral fathers of Israel; for rice, a product not mentioned in the Bible, but which has become a principal article in the dietary of western, as it has from ancient times been of eastern Asia, does not form the chief article of subsistence to the Turkmans. Wheat, under various forms of preparation, still with them maintains its ancient place. Their usual fare is a preparation of wheat, which is also in common use among the Arabs, with whom it is called burgûl, by which name it is commonly known in Syria, where it is much liked even by the people of towns. We have ourselves often partaken of it with satisfaction, enhanced perhaps by the sharpened appetite of a long day's ride; and can recommend it as a nutritive, satisfying, and pleasant meal. It consists of wheat which has been boiled and afterwards dried in the sun, usually in sufficient quantities for the year's consumption. The quantity required for immediate use is re-boiled with butter or oil, and served up in a large wooden bowl, from which all help themselves with the hand.

We cannot say much for the oil; but, with butter, this mess is very good, and it is butter that the tribes chiefly use—for the oil is an agricultural product, and must be purchased when they require it, whereas butter is produced by their own cattle. Good as this dish is, however, with butter alone, it is still better when it is seasoned and lubricated by boiling up with it a fowl, or some pieces of mutton, or some portions of a camel's hump, or of the caudal extremity of a fat-tailed sheep. With these luxurious additions, which are seldom seen among the tribes, but often in towns, a dish of burgûl forms a mess which even princes need not despise.

Besides burgûl, the Ryhaulu Turkmans occasionally use rice, prepared in nearly the same manner. They also eat eggs, honey, dried fruits, and sour milk, called *leben*. This last is an article highly esteemed among all pastoral tribes, and was doubtless one of the forms in which milk is mentioned as an article of diet in the Scriptures, especially in those parts which refer to the analogous condition of life.

It seems to have been this which Abraham presented to the angels, Gen. xviii. 8; and Jael

to Sisera, Judges v. 25. Europeans do not generally relish it much at first; but use renders it agreeable, and it is found to be wholesome and refreshing.

Honey also is mentioned in the sacred books with a degree of frequency which excites more surprise to northern readers, whose habits of diet are so different. Jacob possessed both dried fruits and honey, for we find them among the articles which he sent by his sons to the governor of Egypt, saying, "Carry down the man a present .... a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds," Gen. xliii. 11.

It should be stated that the milk used by the Turkmans is exclusively that of goats, which is always preferred by those who possess these animals. There seems to be reason for this, apart from the exigencies of their condition, as the townspeople also like it better than any other. The superior value of goats' milk is not obscurely indicated in Scripture, where the emphatic intimation, "Thou shalt have goats' milk enough," Prov. xxvii. 27, appears to intimate that it was regarded among the Hebrews as better than any other milk. The Turkmans do not milk their camels, as the Arabs do, and as seems to have been done by the Hebrew

patriarchs ; for we find "milch camels" among the animals presented by Jacob to his brother, Gen. xxxii. 15. The cows among the Turkmans are too few to make their milk any object, and the cows of western Asia, probably from difference of treatment, produce milk much more sparingly than our own. The Hebrews, however, used cow's milk, as appears from Deut. xxxii. 14 ; from which text we also learn that they milked their sheep, which we do not know to be the present practice of any of the tribes and people of western Asia.

The bread used by the Turkmans is a thin unleavened cake, which the women bake, immediately before meal-time, upon a hot iron plate, in less than a minute. Compare this with Sarah's summary baking of bread for her husband's guests, in Gen. xviii. 6 ; and the mode of baking itself is distinctly indicated in Lev. ii. 5, where we read of bread "baken in a pan," more correctly rendered in the margin, "on a flat plate, or slice."

The regular meals of the Turkmans are two in the day—breakfast at about eight o'clock in the morning, and the principal meal, call it dinner or supper, immediately after sunset. This is indeed the general rule of the east, as it was

formerly in the Biblical times. The townspeople, probably, then, as now, broke the long interval by a slight refreshment, or lunch, at noon. In fact, modern usage in Europe has been in this respect gradually coming back to the ancient and still subsisting oriental type, by throwing the principal meal more and more back from the morning to the evening. We have slowly reached the discovery which the orientals made long ago, that it is less desirable that the principal meal should be partaken of amid the business of the day, than that it should take place when the labours of the day have ended.

The reader unaccustomed to the manners of the east, may be amused to hear Burckhardt describe the Ryhaulu Turkmans as "great coxcombs at table, in comparison with the other Levantines." And why? Because, "instead of simply using his fingers, the Turkman twists his thin bread very adroitly into a spoon, which he swallows together with the morsel which he has taken out of the dish with it." "I remember," the traveller adds, "sitting with a dozen of them round a basin of sour milk, which we dispatched without any person, except myself, having in the least soiled his fingers." We think that we

could vindicate the Turkmans from over delicacy in this matter. The nature of their food, more than that of other Levantines, exacts this mode of eating. The particles of boiled wheat, which is their principal food, do not adhere so readily into a mass by pressure as those of rice, and it is therefore more difficult to convey it to the mouth with the fingers alone ; and as to sour milk, we do not see how it could be taken up by the fingers only, and we do not remember to have seen it conveyed to the mouth in any other way than that which he describes, unless by the still more delicate intervention of a wooden spoon. In fact, this mode of eating is more common than Burckhardt's words seem to imply, except when the meal is of comparatively solid materials ; and what is of more interest to the reader of the Bible, it is ancient and Scriptural. We cannot fail to remember "the sop" which our Lord gave to Judas when he had dipped it, John xiii. 26.

As among other pastoral tribes, the women of the Turkmans do not hide themselves even before strangers ; but the girls seldom enter the men's room, although no objection is felt to their talking freely to their father's guests. Their shapes are in general elegant, and their

features regular. Their complexion is as fair at first as that of European females, but as they advance in age the sun browns them a little. This may remind us of the surpassing fairness of Sarah, who was a native of the same latitude, and accustomed to the same habits of life, which attracted the admiring wonder of the dusky Egyptians, Gen. xii. 14, 15; nor should it be overlooked that in the Canticles, the Shulamite, who describes herself as comely, though dark, says that her complexion is dark because the sun had looked upon her, implying that she had once been fair, Cant. i. 6.

The Turkman females are as industrious as those of all wandering tribes, and their occupations are in all respects the same as those of the patriarchal women. Besides the cares of housekeeping, they work the tent-coverings of goats' hair, and woollen carpets, which are inferior only to those wrought by the women of the Tahtar tribes in Persia. Their looms are of primitive simplicity; they do not make use of the shuttle, but pass the woof with their hands.

When we bear in mind the frequent mention of rich dyes among the Israelites in their wandering state, it is of illustrative interest

to learn that the Turkman women have great proficiency in the art of dyeing. Their colours are beautiful. Indigo and cochineal, which they purchase at Aleppo, afford them their blue and red dyes ; but the ingredients of all the others, especially of a peculiarly brilliant green, are from herbs which they gather in the mountains of Armenia ; and the dyeing process is carefully preserved as a national secret. It is applied chiefly to the wool of which the carpets are made. The wool is of the ordinary kind, and the carpets, which are something like our hearth-rugs, are about seven feet long by three broad, and sell at from fifteen to one hundred piastres each.

While the women are constantly employed in these labours, the men pass their time in perfect indolence—except that at sunset they feed the horses and camels—without even refreshing their leisure by some kind of trifling occupation. To smoke their pipes, and to drink the enormous quantities of coffee which we have already mentioned, form their customary and most agreeable pastime. They visit one another often, and sitting around the fire with their pipes and coffee, keep late hours. There is, we believe, a popular notion that the wandering

tribes retire early to their rest; but this is by no means the case. The Arabs, the Tahtars, the Turkmans, the Kurds, are all fond of sitting long at night around their fires, which burn in summer as well as winter; and they vie with the most fashionable people of our own metropolis in the lateness of their hours. In this and in many other respects, as in the lateness of the principal meal recently noticed, different and even contrasted forms of society often exhibit very remarkable coincidences.

A Turkman never leaves his tent to take a ride in the neighbourhood, without being fully armed, usually with gun, pistols, and sabre. This is a custom of all wandering tribes, and originated of old in the general insecurity of life and property, and in the customs of blood-revenge, which render it necessary to very many to hold themselves in a state of constant readiness against the assaults of the avenger. There is something also in the partially military character which all these tribes bear, and which makes them regard their weapons as a part of their dress. There is, however, a great display of weapons upon the persons of most orientals, even not of the tribes; and it is not

unusual to see men habitually exhibit a formidable array of deadly instruments, who never shed any blood but that of a fowl in their lives. How far this may have been the case among the Hebrews we know not well ; but it appears that, in the time of our Lord, swords were ordinarily worn by men of very peaceful pursuits. Luke xxii. 36, implies that the seventy disciples had been directed not to wear swords, which intimates that swords were ordinarily worn ; and from verses 36, 38, it would seem that these weapons were not entirely laid aside even by the apostles.

The mention of blood-revenge calls to mind that the principle of the Tar, or vengeance, has a somewhat singular extension to goods. The following incident, related by Burckhardt, will best explain it :—"A caravan of Turkman camels, laden with wood, was seized last winter, just before the gates of Aleppo, by a detachment of Karashukly, (a mixed tribe of Turkmans and Arabs, who inhabit the banks of the Euphrates, in the neighbourhood of Bir.) One of the Turkmans was wounded, the loads were thrown down, and fifty camels driven away, worth about five hundred piastres of specie. The Turkmans immediately dis-

patched an old Arab woman as ambassadress to their enemies, to treat for the restoration of the camels, and she succeeded in recovering them at the rate of one hundred and fifty piastres a-piece, or eight thousand piastres for the whole. Thus," as I was told by a Turkman chief, " the Tar between us will not be for the whole sum of twenty-five thousand piastres, the real value of the camels, but only for the sum of eight thousand piastres, for which we shall, on the first opportunity, take our revenge." No such custom as this is known to exist among the Arabian tribes ; but it must be admitted to be in full conformity with the *lex talionis*, which has powerful operation among all the wandering tribes.

The Turkmans marry as early as other orientals—the men usually at fourteen or fifteen, and the girls about thirteen. Excepting a few of the principal chiefs, hardly any of them have more than one wife—the tribes availing themselves of the plurality of wives which the law allows as rarely as did the ancient patriarchs. The marriages, as among the Tahtars, are celebrated with much pomp, and nearly in a similar manner. Whenever a

son reaches the marriageable age, his father gives him, even before his marriage, a couple of camels and a horse, that he may defray his private expenses, by the sort of trade which they enable him to carry on.

When the father dies, his property is divided among his family, according to the Moslem law. The dead are interred, without much ceremony, in the burial-grounds of deserted villages, of which there are many in this region —which we cannot traverse far in any direction without being reminded of that unhappy time in which "the villages ceased — they ceased in Israel," Judges v. 7.

The Turkmans, like the Tahtars, Arabs, and Kurds, are a nation of robbers; that is to say, everything they can lay hold of in the open country they regard as their lawful prize, provided that it does not belong to, or is not under the protection of, acknowledged friends. The Arabs make some amends for their insolence by the really liberal hospitality with which they receive friends and strangers. In this respect, the Turkmans cannot claim much praise; and theirs and the Kurdish tribes stand much lower than the Arabs, and even the Tahtars, in the disposition to entertain

strangers. Some of the particulars which Burckhardt gives of his stay among them serves to explain this, though we have reason to think the picture overdrawn, and that the character of a nation would be too hastily inferred from the particulars he affords. In explanation of some of these particulars, it may be necessary to add the painful fact that he travelled as a native (Arab) Mohammedan; and there is reason to know that his assumption of that character was far less perfect than he supposed, and sometimes created suspicions, and subjected him to discourtesies, from which he would otherwise have been exempted. With the caution which the knowledge of these facts supplies, the statement may be given.

"I was introduced at Aleppo to Mohammed Ali Aga, a man of considerable influence amongst the Ryhaulu, as a physician, who was travelling in search of herbs, and I succeeded in supporting my assumed character during near a fortnight's stay under his tent. Before my departure from Aleppo, I made him a present of coffee and sweetmeats, to the amount of sixty piastres, and I promised him another present when he should have brought me back

in safety to Aleppo. Notwithstanding these precautions, my reception in his tent was rather cool, and I soon found that I was among men who had no other idea than that of getting as much out of me as they could. They were not under the least restraint, but calculated, in my presence, how much my visit was worth to them, as I sufficiently understood from their animated tone and gestures, added to the few Turkish words which I had learned. To spare my dinner, my host took me out visiting almost every day, just before the dinner-hour; and that he might know how far it would be prudent to incur expense on my account, he permitted one of his friends to search my pockets, and was cruelly disappointed when he found that my purse did not contain more than four or five piastres. My horse, for the maintenance of which I had agreed with my host, was fed with straw, until I told them that I should take care of it myself, when they were obliged to deliver its daily portion of barley into my own hands. Such was the liberality which I experienced in return for the medical advice which they received, without hesitation, from me, upon demanding it. Their minds seemed intent only upon money; except among

the lovers, there was no other topic of conversation; and instead of the Arab virtues of honour, frankness, and hospitality, there appeared to be no other motive of action among them than the pursuit of gain. The person of a Frank may be safe among them, but his luggage will be exposed to close search, and whatever strikes the fancy of a powerful man, will be asked of him in such a manner, that it is advisable to give up the object at once. I had fortunately hidden my compass in my girdle; but a thermometer, which they found in my pocket, attracted general notice. If I had explained to them the use I meant to make of it, it would have confirmed the suspicion, already hinted to me by one of them, that I intended to poison their springs. I pretended that the thermometer was a surgical instrument, which, being put into the blood of an open wound, served to show whether the wound was dangerous or not. It is not more from the behaviour of the Turkmans towards myself, that I formed my opinion of their character, than from their conduct towards each other. They are constantly upon their guard against robbers and thieves of their own tribe: they cheat each other in the most trifling affairs,

and, like most of the Aleppo merchants, make use of the most awful oaths and imprecations to conceal their falsehood. If they have one good quality, it is their tolerance in religious matters—which proves, on the other hand, how little they care about them."

This last remark leads us to observe, that no books of any kind are to be seen among the Turkmans, and that, probably, not one in fifty among them knows how to read or write. Like the Tahtars, few of them know the text of the stated prayers; and it would not make much difference if they did, as these prayers are in a language (Arabic) which they do not understand. It is a fact, that the greater part of the Moslem world, like the greater part of the Roman Catholic world, prays in a tongue unknown to those who give it utterance. Indeed, a prominent part of Moslem education lies in learning to recite these prayers by rote, without understanding; and the Turkmans being, like the Tahtars, deficient in this attainment, are content, when they do go through the show of prayer, to use the postures without the words. The married people, women as well as men, are tolerably exact in going through these ceremonies at the appointed

times; but they are generally neglected by young unmarried people of both sexes. Some families of consequence have with them a Faqui, or travelling Imaum, to teach their children to read and pray. His position is one of little dignity, and he is expected to discharge, and does discharge, cheerfully, many of the duties of a menial servant. These men are mostly natives of the Albostan district, who receive their education in the mosques there, and who follow the Turkmans to participate in the pious alms which the Koran prescribes. There is much in their position to remind one of the Levite of Bethlehem, who, in the days of the Judges, set forth in search of a livelihood, and was content to become "a father and a priest to Micah, of Mount Ephraim, for his victuals, a suit of clothes, and a salary of twenty-five shillings by the year." In fact, their condition, in regard to religion, is very similar to that of the Tahtars, though for various reasons, which it is not necessary to state here, we incline to regard the latter as more accessible to the influences of the gospel—if we may, without presumption, speak of one place or people being, more than another, accessible to the work of the Holy Spirit—

who, in one day—a day which we sigh for, and which we hope to be not distant—can open "a great door and effectual"—a door which no man can shut—in places which had seemed hopelessly walled up in the triple brass of error, hatred, and obstinacy!

CHAPTER VI.

MISCELLANEOUS FACTS.

In conformity with popular and general usage, we have given the general name of Tahtars to the tribes which form the subject of this volume. To have called them *Turkish* tribes would have been scientifically more correct. But the terms Turk and Turkish having acquired in this country a narrow sense which restricts their application to the Osmanlis, it has seemed advisable to adopt the term more usually applied to the wandering pastoral tribes from central Asia which are best known in western Asia, although that term, in strictness, belongs, perhaps, rather to the Mongol tribes. That division, which has more particularly engaged our attention, and to which we have thus, in conformity with general usage, given the name of Tahtar tribes, is identified, through all its local designations, and in all the countries

through which it is dispersed, by the common use of the Turkish language. It is by this, as well as by certain physiognomical conformities, that the (so called) Tahtars, Eelauts, Turkmans, etc., are recognised as the same race of people.

Dr. Prichard, who is a high authority in ethnography, distinguishes the great nomadic nations of central Asia into five races. His views on the subject are embodied in the following words :—" The great central region of high Asia, whence all the rivers take their source which flow southward into the Indian Ocean, eastward to the sea of Okhotsk and Japan, northward to the Frozen Ocean of Siberia, may be contemplated as a vast upland or plateau, comprehending, perhaps, one-fourth part of the whole area of the Asiatic continent. It is bounded on both sides, namely, towards the north and south, by a double series of mountains, each of which, though in rather a low latitude, passes the limits of eternal snow. Of the four longitudinal chains which compose their double barrier, the two southern are the great Himalayan ; and to the northward of it, and partly parallel to it, the lofty Tibetan Kuenlun. In the valley between these two

chains, itself the highland of Tibet, of Ladak, and H'Lassa, near the sacred lake of Manasa-Sarowara, rise the two great rivers of India, Indus, and Brahma-putra, which inclose on two sides, and insulate the whole region of Hindustan. To the northward of Kuenlun is the great central plain of high Asia, in various parts of which many rivers, which find no exit through such barriers, pour their waters into inland seas. The rivers which flow into Koko-Nor, or the Blue Lake, into Nor-Saisan, Lob-Nor, and the sea of Balkash, fertilise vast spaces of pasture land, where the primitive nomades of central Asia fed for centuries their flocks, and multiplied those hordes which, under their late descendants, Altila, Tchingkis, and Timûr, were destined to change the aspect of human affairs in a great part of the habitable world. To the northward of the central plain, Thiansham, or the Celestial Mountain, and the Golden Mountain, or Altai, separate the upland from the low region through which the rivers Libereri take their course to the Icy Sea.

In the centre, or on the borders, of this table-land, which may be termed the Island of High Asia—for such it must have been before the further subsiding of the ocean laid bare the

low plains which lie around its terraces on every side—were the abodes, or rather the wandering-places, of the five nomadic races: five may thus be reckoned, although one of them cannot be traced historically from the plateau. The descent from thence of this first bunch of nations towards the north-west, can only be inferred by a certain affinity of language, and of physical and moral character, between it and the three principal nomadic races. Another member of the group, I mean the south-eastern, belongs not to the central space, but to its Tibetan border. The three members of the central group are the Turkish, the Mongolian, and Tunquisan races; the north-western stem is the Ugorian, by some termed the Finnish, or Tschmdish race; the south-eastern are the Bhotiya, the mountain, who, on the northern boundary of Hindustan, have appropriated the name of Tahtars, though they have no right to that celebrated appellation, which belonged originally to the Mongolian tribe, who inhabited the banks of the lake Bouyir."

Of the five races thus distinguished, the one designated Turkish is that on which we have been engaged. Dr. Prichard and all the

most learned writers on Asiatic history, are agreed in the opinion, which seems, indeed, unquestionable, that the Turkish races now spread through different regions, from the wall of China to the Danube and the Adriatic, are of the stock of the Hiong-nu, that powerful and celebrated people who threatened China before the Christian era, and formerly occupied an extensive region, including nearly all the countries now called Mongolia, from the north of China to the Altai mountains.

The Turkish nations now existing display two very different types of countenance and of bodily organization. There are, first, the Osmanli Turks, to whom we usually limit the Turkish name. These are descended, in great part, from the hordes who formed the armies of the Seljukian conquerors of Khorassan. They are the most anciently civilized of the race. The type of their features, and their whole organization, is in some wholly, and in others nearly, as the European model—produced, no doubt, in great part, by long intermixture with the Caucasian races. The other division—of more present interest to us—is found in the nomadic tribes which have, in this volume, engaged our notice, chiefly as found in lands

more or less distant from their original seats; but in which lands they continue to preserve and exemplify most of the primitive characteristics of the race. Dr. Prichard is, however, inclined to think that, the proper characteristics of the race are most completely preserved in the Kirghiz tribes, which inhabit the frontiers of the Russian and Chinese empires, and nomadise over vast mountain plains from lakes Aksakal and Tenghiz to the high region of Pamer. Lieutenant Wood, in the account of his journey to the source of the Oxus, has thus described them :—

"In stature the Kirghiz are under the middle size: of a kyl numbering seven men, the tallest was five feet five and a half inches in height. Their countenance is disagreeable; the upper part of the nose sinks into the face, leaving the space between their deeply-seated and elongated eyes without the usual dividing ridge; the brow immediately above the eye is protuberant, but shuts back more abruptly than in Europeans; their cheeks, large and bloated, look as if pieces of flesh had been daubed upon them; a slender beard covers their chin, and, in those individuals who have more luxuriant hair, the beard has a natural curl. Their persons are

not muscular. Their complexions are darkened by exposure to all weathers, rather than by the sun. The women are rather good-looking, and of delicate form, and make good wives." He remarks in several places on the ruddy and healthy complexion of the Kirghiz females. He says: "The Kirghiz resemble the Uzbeks, but the difference between a vigorous and temperate climate is observable in the well-proportioned frame of the Uzbek and in the stunted growth of the Kirghiz." If this be so, we may, perhaps, attribute to the same cause the greatly improved appearance which the Turkish tribes in Persia and in Asia Minor and Syria present, as compared with the Kirghiz model of the primitive race.

These tribes have naturally attracted the notice of most travellers who have gone through the countries in which they dwell, and we are thus supplied with some particulars which could not well be introduced in the preceding chapters, as they relate to other and different septs of the same great body. To some of these facts we are glad to appropriate the remaining pages of this volume.

That instructive old French traveller, the chevalier D'Arvieux, relates that, on his way to

Aleppo, in November, 1679, he encountered several caravans of Turkmans, on their march southward to avoid the winter. "The men," he says, "were well-mounted, and armed with lances and other weapons. Their baggage, young women, girls, and children, were upon camels, while the other women marched on foot, singing and spinning as they walked along. Thus, in old times, journeyed Jacob and Lot, when the exigencies of pasturage constrained them to change their quarters. The oxen, cows, camels, horses, foals, sheep, and goats, marched in little herds, conducted by the women, singing and spinning. We saluted each other with much civility; and, indeed, they are a good kind of people, who love good living, and are fond of liberty. The men, leaving household affairs to the women, are constantly on horseback, but the women take care of the horses, and are all day employed in one kind of labour or other, which renders them vigorous and indefatigable.

"The Turkmans are less jealous of their women than other eastern people. The women conversed with us freely, and did not conceal their faces. They were much tanned by the sun, but their features were regular, their teeth

fine, their eyes full of fire, and they displayed much sprightliness in their conversation."

Dr. Russell, who quotes part of this in his Natural History of Aleppo, says that it exactly agrees with his own observations on a large troop of Turkmans, which he met with on the plains of Antioch, (probably our Ryhaulus.) "They were encamped at a little distance from our tents, and behaved with the utmost civility. As we sat at table in the open air, we were surrounded after supper by a number of women, young and old, who highly entertained us with their questions and remarks. Their tents are made of white linen, and, according to D'Arvieux, they are much neater in their camps, and more sober and frugal in their diet, than the Bedouins.* They live always in the field, acknowledge the Grand Seignior, and trade largely in cattle. They do not plunder travellers, but treat them with great hospitality. It is a saying among the eastern people, that you should eat with the Arabs, and sleep with the Turkmans, whose tents are better provided with beds and other accommodations."

* This is hardly correct in the large sense. D'Arvieux was, however, not acquainted with the Desert Arabs, but only with those in Palestine, whose fare is better.

The Turkman tribes are several times mentioned by Peter Teixeira, in his journey from Baghdad to Aleppo, (January, 1605.) In one place he says, "We entered upon spacious plains, and in the midst of them found about forty dwellings of Turkmans, with their families and cattle, sheep, camels, and mules, grazing about. The dwellings are all round, the roofs convex, the frame within of poles or canes, and the covering without of felt. They are all movable, and so contrived as to be rolled up together, and carried on camels from place to place. Some of them are very cleanly and curious, hung within, particularly the Xeque's, (Sheikh's,) which was large and handsome. These Turkmans are true Turks, of the first that came from Turkestan.* They are brave, either on foot or horseback, well-limbed, strong, patient of labour, and resolute in any undertaking, living on their breed of cattle ;† but if they meet with an opportunity of robbing, they do not let it slip. Their women do

* Properly the Turkmans stand in the same relation to Turks as the Bedouins, or Desert Arabs, to the Arabians of the towns.

† Not, therefore, like the Ryhaulus, addicted to agriculture. Indeed, most of the statements we are now producing refer to purely pastoral tribes.

not conceal themselves, but are of a very sturdy disposition, and generally look after the cattle. They are clad almost like the Galicians in Spain. All of them wear neats'-skin boots, short petticoats, close doublets, and very long cloths, wrapped about their heads in the shape of a pyramid."

The same traveller speaks of another sort of Turkmans, of different and more warlike habits from those he usually saw. These are called Begdelees. They acknowledged no vassalage, but maintained complete independence of the powers whose authority the other tribes at least nominally acknowledged. These Begdelees are also mentioned by Pocock. "They mount on horseback, live in the tents, and neither till the land nor graze cattle; and though they have some sort of alliances, yet they are professed robbers. Sometimes they are above a thousand of them together, and they raise contributions on villages, under pretence of protecting them, but where they receive their dues they do not rob openly."

Pocock, who had seen Turkmans in both their winter and summer-quarters, points out the distinction that, although their tents have only a slight covering generally in summer, a

thick sort of felt is fitted to them, so as to keep out the rain. We have ourselves been in such tents in winter, and admired the comparatively comfortable protection from the inclemency of the weather which the coverings of felt afforded.

The Turkman tribes are numerous in Asia Minor, and often seen in the vicinity of the seats of most of "the seven churches" of the Apocalypse.

A clergyman, named Chishull, who visited this quarter in 1699, mentions, that he saw, on his return from Ephesus to Smyrna, "a large extended pasture, overspread with flocks, herds, and huts of Turkmans, who had there pitched their station, to the number of fourteen hundred, reckoning about two hundred tents, with seven persons, more or less, appertaining to each. As the whole race of Turks were nothing else but a numerous colony that swarmed from Scythia, so these Turkmans seem to be the particular descendants of the nomade Scythæ, or the shepherd Scythians, and, like them, make it their employment to breed and nurture cattle. To this end, they never assemble in towns nor betake themselves to houses, but fleet from place to place, as the season of the year directs, and seize, without

control, the vast neglected pastures of this desert empire."

A recent traveller* gives a very graphic description of a Turkman caravan which he fell in with on the road to Sardis. This was obviously a more important migration, and for a greater distance, than that described by D'Arvieux, in which some of the females went on foot, spinning as they went. "We had met but two or three solitary travellers since we left Casabar, but shortly after crossing the stream, we encountered a long caravan of Turkmans, who were changing their pastures and place of encampment. A numerous herd of small but fine cattle, driven and kept to the road by some young men on horseback, with long spears in their hands, formed the van of the pastoral march. Then came several hardy-looking patriarchs, with bronzed faces and flowing beards, mounted on good, active horses; they were followed by their wives and their families. Some of the women, whose faces were scarcely veiled at all, were elevated on the backs of camels, and others rode astride on horseback; the elder of their children rode behind them, but the young ones were bestowed

* Macfarlane.

in panniers, slung over the camels' or horses' backs. A string of camels, loaded with the dark, thick covering and the framework of their tents, which fold up something like an umbrella, with their household utensils and other property, came after the women and children; and the rear of the march was brought up by a flock of sheep and goats, tended by some long-legged, active striplings. We met this primitive assemblage where the road was narrow, being confined by rude rocks to the right, and by a hollow, in which ran a stream, to our left. In passing, I several times jostled against them, but they were all good-natured and courteous; the men laid their hands to their breasts, and gave us the Turkish salutation to travellers, recommending us to Allah, and wishing that our journey might be happy; the women did not attempt to muffle up their faces, but returned my gaze with a stare of astonishment. They were not handsome; their cheek-bones were high, and their whole face hard-favoured; but they had large gazelle-like eyes, long lashes, and some of them could pretend to the cherished charm of the united eyebrow. They also greeted us as we passed; and the children behind them, and the

young ones, poking out their heads from the panniers, like kangaroos from the pouch of their dam, hailed us with a chirping laugh."

The "cherished charm of the united eyebrow," mentioned in the above extract, is deemed a great ornament, indispensable to perfect beauty, throughout the east. It consists in the inner extremities of each eyebrow being so prolonged as to meet over the nose, forming one continuous waving line along the margin of the brow. This is sometimes seen among ourselves, and the effect upon the expression of the countenance is not, we believe, usually considered to be pleasing; but the orientals are of a very different opinion. There is nothing they more admire. It occurs naturally more frequently than with us; and where nature has denied this ornament, attempts are made to supply it by art, either by inducing the growth of the hair, or by supplying its place in that part by paint. This fancy is ancient. We see from the mural paintings of the Egyptians, that it existed among them; and was, probably, found also among the Hebrews, being included in that painting of the face which is mentioned in the case of Jezebel, 2 Kings ix. 30; although, certainly,

the operation there primarily denoted is that of tinging the eyelids with antimony, which is still the general practice of the east.

We also trace this "cherished charm of the united eyebrow" among even the ancient Greeks, one of whose poets, directing a painter to portray a perfect beauty, says, among other things :—

> "With care the sable brows extend,
> And in two arches nicely bend;
> That the fair space that lies between
> The meeting shade may scarce be seen."

But to return to the Turkmans; the traveller lately quoted had a rare opportunity, on his arrival at Sardis, to form a closer acquaintance with a family belonging to a small migratory tribe of them, encamped among the ruins. The head of this family had, from curiosity, come to survey their proceedings, while engaged in examining the remains of a temple. "My pocket-compass, the use of which, as explained by my diagram, made him stare with astonishment, and consider it as a wonderful piece of magic; my sketch-book and pencils (wood that could write without ink); the slight drawings of the ruins I had made, severally excited his wonder, without, however, insuring much of his approbation.

'You Franks,' said he, 'are a curious people—but what is the use of all this?' The horseman struck one of the columns with his spear, and then, pointing to the beautiful but fallen capital, he exclaimed, with an agreeable smile, 'The old Greeks were strong men, and built strong places; but the Osmanlis are as strong as they, and can knock down what they put up!'"

The same man encountered the party late in the day, when they were in search of a lodging, and invited them to his home. "We followed our voluntary host to a strange habitation, a rude little cabin, pitched by the side of which was a conical tent. The interior of the cabin consisted of one undivided room, which we found occupied by a swarthy woman, who was cooking the family supper at a fire on the ground in the middle of the apartment, by three equally swarthy children, and by a rough colt. I was amused at the thought of passing the night in such choice society; and on remarking the narrow dimensions of the room, and the absence of all furniture, save the black pilaff kettle, that was steaming in the centre, two low wicker-stools, a straw mat rolled up, and some sheep-skins, I wondered how we

should all be disposed of. We were very hungry, and thought fit to request that something might be added to the usual domestic supper. A valuable addition soon made its appearance in the form of a small lamb, which was forthwith roasted whole, over the increased fire. The first thing served up was a dish of boiled wheat, made up, in the lieu of rice, into a sort of pilaff, which, united with yaourt, (sour milk,) that was furnished in abundance, I found agreeable enough. The delicate lamb was next laid on the mat, and, having neither knives nor forks, we tore it to pieces with our fingers. It was tender and delicious, in spite of the rude, hasty cooking, and our not less rude mode of carving it. Our hostess waited on us attentively. Her husband and the suridji* ate with us of the pilaff, but were not to be induced to partake of the lamb. I thought that, perhaps, this abstinence might arise from certain religious rituals: and the roast lamb, the favourite dish of the Moslems, is peculiarly devoted to the festival of the Bairam, which succeeds Ramazan, and was now close at hand. After our truly Homeric

* The man sent with hired horses, or mules, and who acts also as guide.

meal, the wife and children took theirs in the furthest corner of the room. We had then thick coffee, without sugar, and our chibooks, (pipes,) which were expertly filled and lit by one of the children, a sturdy, roguish-looking, little boy, a promising scion of the Turkman stock. Two neighbours dropped in to add to the conviviality of our party. Unlike the solemn Osmanlis, these fellows were cheerful and talkative. The articles of my dress, and, indeed, everything I had with me, excited great interest; but it was the watch—a repeater—that most excited their surprise and admiration. I thought I must break it in making it strike over and over again, in the delighted ears of all present. Though wild in their looks, and rude in their manners, my associates were kind, civil, and even respectful. As I looked round the barbarous hovel, I felt myself in as perfect security as if lodged in a European hotel or mansion, with the civilized and refined for my host; and I thought, with a smile, of the panic that the mere name of these same Turkmans, in the same country, never failed to cause to my precursor, Dr. Chandler. Before nine o'clock, the visitors left us, with the usual and expressive salutation of

peace and good-will. Except the occasional bark of a dog, not a sound was then heard from the pastoral hamlet. Some bustle, however, ensued in our cabin; the mat was removed to the upper end of it, the sheep-skins were spread, and now, thought I, comes the solution of the problem—where shall we all sleep? The solution was as agreeable to me as I could have wished: the wife and children were sent into the adjoining tent; our host soon followed them; and as the other inmate, the colt, had before been disposed of, I was left, with my dragoman and suridji, in undisturbed possession of the room."

It was on the way from Ephesus to Laodicea, near the river Mæander, that the rev. John Hartley beheld one of the most regular encampments of Turkmans he had ever seen. "The tents of these wanderers were, as usual, all black; a circumstance which, viewed in connexion with their great neatness and regularity, may, perhaps, be deemed an illustration of Canticles i. 5: 'I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.' It ought to be added, that, in Asia Minor, the tents of the Turkmans only are of this colour." He adds,

in a note—"It must be acknowledged that, to the tents of the Turkmans, viewed singly, it would be often difficult to ascribe the attribute of comeliness; but, as forming part of a prospect, they are a very beautiful object."

In the same region, Dr. Chandler had a view of a plain full of booths, with the Turkmans sitting by their doors, under sheds resembling porticoes, or by shady trees, surrounded with flocks of goats.

We have been anticipated by Paxton in pointing out the Scriptural illustration to be found in this. That ingenious writer says: "In the same situation the three angels found Abraham, when they came to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, sitting under the portico or skirts of his tent, near the door, to enjoy the refreshing breeze, and superintend his servants. It was not the hottest part of the day when Chandler saw the Turkman shepherds sitting at the door of their booths; it was soon after ten in the morning; and when Abraham was sitting at his hut door, it might be nearly at the same hour. In the hottest part of the day, according to the practice of those countries, the patriarch had retired to rest. The goats of the Turkmans were feeding around their

huts, and if Abraham's cattle, which is extremely probable, were feeding around his tent in the same manner, it accounts for the expedition with which he ran and fetched a calf from the herd, in order to entertain his visitants."

In the account we have given of the Ryhaulu Turkmans, it has been seen that they have their winter-quarters in the plain of Antioch. In that plain there are other Turkman tribes, who have made a step further than them towards the condition of cultivators, having fixed residences, houses in the plain, with farms, but who betake themselves to the mountains, and dwell in tents during the summer, taking their cattle with them, but return to their proper homes in the plain as winter approaches. These parts are so rarely visited in the winter season, that it is difficult to collect any information respecting the aspect which they, or even the less settled Ryhaulûs, present during that time of the year. Captains Irby and Mangles were, however, in the plain of Antioch about the end of the month of November. Being overtaken by rain, and being still two hours' journey distant from Antioch, they requested shelter in some "cottages," which they perceived

at hand. "The first two cottages had only women in them, whose husbands being absent, they did not dare to receive us; at the third, we went to the men, who were willing to admit us, but the women would not hear of it, and expressed their refusal in a violent and ill-natured manner. During the time we were soliciting a shelter, were it only in a cow-house, the rain was pouring in torrents, and we making a pitiable appearance, being thoroughly soaked. Seeing no entreaty could succeed, we gave them the *kat-ack-harach*, the Arab expression of thanks, and tried another cottage, where we were admitted without hesitation. These cottages are long buildings, of a single room; the cattle occupy one end, and human inhabitants the other. They have extensive plantations of young mulberries for the silk-worms, and looms for manufacturing their produce. The occupants of the hut, who consisted of the proprietor, his mother, wife, brother, and children, were of that tribe of Mohammedans designated as Turkmans. They were uncommonly kind, placing us near a large fire, giving us good bed and coverlets, and making us join them in a humble supper of dourra and wheat boiled. It rained a great deal the whole night, and we were de-

tained till noon the following day, when we proceeded to Antioch, giving these people eleven piastres and a double gold Napoleon, value forty-four piastres, as an ornament for the wife, besides paying for the horses, corn, etc. The women in this country adorn themselves with money according to their circumstances; the poorer class with paras, the higher orders with piastres of eleven sequins each, and gold roubles of two-and-a-half each. We gave this present as much to reward the goodness of our host and his wife, as to make the ladies in the other cottages ashamed of themselves. We also thought that a few piastres thus disposed of might benefit other travellers coming after us, and who might find themselves in the same predicament."

Mr. Buckingham, who was in the same quarter in the month of May, speaks of resident Turkman farmers, seemingly fully fixed down as cultivators—not, indeed, exactly in the level and insalubrious plain, but upon the hills around it. He speaks of being hospitably entertained by a Turkman farmer—"he being a cultivator and proprietor of flocks at the same time, who furnished us with a meal of bread, milk, cheese, and hard butter from his own dairy. There were two or three houses inha-

bited by persons like himself, the dwellers in which came and joined us on the grass. Each of these were the best-built and most commodious dwellings that I have yet seen anywhere in the country without the limit of towns. They were each of two stories, with balconies, arched windows, window-frames, and window-shutters of wood, and had each a large court before them, with the kitchen and other domestic offices apart. Over the door of one of them was an Arabic inscription, in marble; and the whole presented an appearance of wealth and comfort exceedingly rare among the cultivators in other parts of Syria."

With this extract, which exhibits to us the nomade pastor brought to the condition of a settled cultivator, yet possessing flocks and herds, sent forth, doubtless, in the season, to the free pasture of the mountains, under the charge of sons and servants—we may suitably close this survey of their condition. It is our earnest hope and prayer, that those who, in the next generations, may have to take the like survey, may find this poor and, at present, very benighted people, brought, by the boundless grace of the Holy Spirit—so mighty in working—into a better and holier condition—a

condition which may enable them to sing the pilgrim song, so appropriate to their mode of life :—

"No foot of land do I possess;
No cottage in the wilderness:
A poor wayfaring man,
I lodge awhile in tents below,
Or gladly wander to and fro,
Till I my Canaan gain."

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